

SERMONS

ON

Different Subjects.

By Z. MUDGE, *K*

Prebendary of *Exeter*, and Vicar of St. *Andrew's* in *Plymouth*.



L O N D O N :

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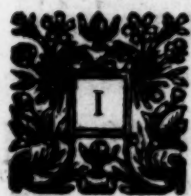
TO

THE RIGHT REVEREND

STEPHEN,

Lord Bishop of *Exeter*.

MY LORD,



HAVE been at length
perswaded to suffer a few
Sermons to come abroad
into the World. Most
of these, separately, I had long since
been desir'd to publish; but was
aware of the Difference between a

DEDICATION.

Discourse as it comes alive from the Mouth, and as it lies cold before the Eye: For, besides that they were all (except the last) composed purely for the Service of my own Church, there was, I knew very well, a certain Want of Correctness, which passes off well enough in Hearing, but which in Print is soon perceived and hardly forgiven.

My LORD, I am still sensible of their Defects, but by degrees, I know not how, have been made to believe (as we are easily led to think favourably of our own) that they may be over-ballanced by some hard Truths found here and there; which, like Seeds, if they happen to fall into good Ground, will be capable of considerable Improvement. And as nothing less than this can justify the Publication of these Sermons, I
may

DEDICATION.

may be allow'd to own; that with this Hope I have consented to it.

Such as they are, to You, my LORD, I humbly offer them; not with a foolish Imagination of adding any Honour to your LORDSHIP's Name, as neither on the other hand am I afraid that it can suffer by their Imperfections; your LORDSHIP's Character is too firmly establish'd to be affected one way or other by so small a Thing; but, my LORD, they are your Due. It was your LORDSHIP's Grace that first gave me Orders; you have since that given me many Proofs of a particular Regard, and not long ago an honourable Mark of your Esteem.

These are Things, my LORD, that call for the best Returns I can make; which, I am afraid, will all
end

DEDICATION.

end (such is my Inability) in this poor Acknowledgment; but your LORDSHIP, I know, is good enough to accept even This, and so believe me what I really am with the utmost Respect and Gratitude,

MY LORD,

Your most dutiful,

and most obedient

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humble Servant,

Z. MUDGE.

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SERM.

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S E R M O N I.

ON CHARITY.

HEB. xiii. 16.

*To do good and to communicate forget not:
For with such Sacrifices God is well
pleased.*



THE Christian Hebrews, to whom this Epistle is written, seem to have been reproach'd by their Brethren, who did not believe, with the Want of an Altar, a Priest and a Sacrifice. In answer to this the Apostle says, that they wanted none of these; and in the 15th and 16th Verses he proceeds particularly to say, what are those Christian Sacrifices with which God

SERM.
I.

SERM. is well pleased : " By him therefore, says

I. " he, *i. e.* by Christ our high Priest, let us
 " offer the Sacrifice of Praise to God conti-
 " nually, that is, the Fruit of our Lips, gi-
 " ving Thanks to his Name : And to do
 " good and to communicate forget not ; for
 " with such Sacrifices God is well pleased."

To do good and to communicate are not two Things, but only two Expressions to signify one very natural Fruit of that Beneficent and Humane Temper of Soul which inclines us to sympathize with our indigent Brethren, and to impart some of our own Advantages to those that want them. And consequently it is probable that the Sacrifices, with which God is here said to be well pleased, comprehend as well the Sacrifice of Praise mention'd in the Verse before, as the Sacrifice of Beneficence or Charity mention'd in the Text : But as the Words of the Text lead me to speak of this latter Sacrifice only, I mean the Sacrifice of Charity, I shall now confine myself to this, and endeavour to shew,

1st. The Nature of Charity in general,
 And 2^{dly}. The Obligations we lie under to the Practice of it.

As

On Charity.

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SERM.

I.

As to the Nature of Charity, which the Scriptures every where so much insist on, in its first and strictest meaning it is not the same with Alms-giving or giving to the Poor; for St. *Paul* evidently distinguishes them, where he puts the Case *1 Cor. xiii.* that "tho' we should bestow all our Goods to feed the Poor, and yet we had not Charity, it would profit us nothing." For it is possible to suppose that we might do this from a Principle of Vain-glory, or Popularity, in order afterwards, some how or other, to make an Advantage of it, as *Manlius* is said to have done among the *Romans*; or from an extravagant and whimsical Contempt of this World's Goods, whereby we rather threw them away than gave them; or from any other Humour unaccountable. In all which Cases the Poor might by Accident reap a Benefit from us, and yet God Almighty, who knows the true Principles from which we act, never put it to our Account as a Virtue. In a Word, Giving is an external Act of the Body, which may be perform'd from many Reasons

SERM. good or bad, or sometimes no Reason at
 I. all; but Charity lies deep in the Soul, as
 all other Virtues do, and consequently
 must in its Nature be different from any
 outward Action.

There is another meaning of Charity frequent among us, according to which it signifies a good-natured Opinion of others, and a Disposition to interpret their Words or Actions in the best Sense: But this is not properly the true and original Notion of the Scripture Charity, but only as the other, a natural Branch and Effect of it. For it is easy to conceive that such a Charity may proceed from an Easiness, an Indolence, or a weakness of Mind, an Incapacity of Judging or Distinguishing, and the like.

True Charity in its first and primitive Meaning, is the same in a Christian View which Humanity is in a Moral: It is that universal Love to Mankind, that ground of Benevolence, Affection, and Sympathy which is due to the whole human Kind from Reasons of Religion, that Humanity is from Reasons of Nature.

From

On Charity.

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From this Charity placed at the Root SERM.
and Bottom of the Soul, will naturally I.

grow both these Kinds of Charity mention'd before, and every other Property of it described by St. *Paul* in the afore-named Chapter *1 Cor. xiii.* it will shew itself in Kindness, in Thinking no Evil, in Believing and Hoping all things well: For it will naturally give a favourable Prepossession to the Mind concerning Men and Things. And so too it will be ever prompting us to a Compassion and Fellow-feeling in every kind of Distress, and consequently to do good and to communicate, to assist and relieve our Brother in any manner which we are able, and in Proportion as we are affected with it, and to make his Case our own. So that tho' communicating or imparting to the Indigent and Necessitous in any manner be not strictly the same with Charity, or that universal Love of Mankind, yet it is so necessary an Effect of it, that it is absolutely impossible to suppose a real Charity in the Soul, but it must manifest itself by some external Acts of Beneficence in Proportion

SERM. tion to the Abilities of the Person that
 I. possesses it. And from thence it has come
 to pass by an easy Transition familiar to
 every Language, that doing Good and
 Communicating has gain'd by way of
 Eminence the Title of Charity, as being
 one of its most certain and most glorious
 Properties.

Taking Charity therefore for the future
 in this Sense, I shall discourse of it ac-
 cording to the Distinction which I have
 hinted before, as

A Moral Virtue, and as

A Christian Duty, and in both Views
 shew how highly the Practice of it is in-
 cumbent upon us.

First then I am to treat of it as a moral
 Virtue; and to shew upon the Principles
 of Reason and common Humanity, the
 Obligations we lie under both to love
 Mankind, and to exert that Love by an
 actual Communication of the Advantages
 we enjoy, in some Proportion, to those
 that want them.

It has been much controverted among
 moral Writers, where to place the Foun-
 dation of that Love which ought to pass
 between

On Charity.

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between Man and Man. Some, and those SERM.
are they that value themselves as going I.

upon the most generous Scheme, would fetch it directly and immediately from that natural Relation which subsists between all Mankind; so that a Man rightly form'd, finds in himself an Affection for the rest of Mankind as naturally, and feels himself interested in their well or ill Being as intimately as the several Members of the same Body are mutually concern'd for one another. Should you ask these Philosophers why we ought to love Mankind, they would tell you that no Reason ought to be given for it; it is an original and innate Affection, an Instinct, a social Sense as much belonging to the human Nature as that whereby we feel Self-pain or Self-pleasure. There are another Sort, who observing Nature to be the Creature of God, and all the several Relations and mutual Dependences between one and another, and the Interests resulting from them to come out of the Hand of an All-wise Creator, have consider'd this Love under the Notion of a

B 4

Law;

SERM. Law; God Almighty having plainly fig-

I. ified by the Nature of Things, that it was his Will that Men should love one another: This has the Advantage of carrying a greater Appearance of Piety. A third Kind there are, cunning Men, who have look'd shrewdly thro' Things; and they have discover'd at last, that this universal Love of Mankind, is but a more delicate and refin'd Sort of Self-love, inasmuch as it being impossible that any single Man can subsist of himself and support his own Well-being, without the Assistance of his Fellow-men, it becomes very reasonable that he should love others as far as they contribute to his good; and very prudent and necessary to his own Interest that he should do something for the Good of Others, so much as is proper to intitle him to those Returns of Favour which he wants from them.

Now this Contrariety of Sentiments with relation to the Love of Mankind, is One of many Instances where Men differ without any Reason for Difference; for they are all manifestly right as far as they

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they affirm, and false only where they deny Truth to the Others. For will any Person who has observed upon his own Composition, and felt the Compassion which arises in his Breast upon the Sight of a human Creature afflicted, the Idea of Innocence oppress'd, Merit defeated, tho' a Thousand Years ago, the Indignation growing upon the Notion of Injustice, Impudence and Vice flourishing, and the Joy from the Prosperity of Goodness and Virtue, tho' at the most distant Ends of the World; will any Man, I say, that has felt all this, deny those social Affections which unite us to all Mankind, and our Interests to theirs? Which give us immediate Pain or Pleasure without the least Appearance of any Self-concern? But then as this is true, so it is true that, to those who acknowledge the Being of God, and the intire Dependence of the Creation upon him, (and we are now talking to such only) a God who gave to all Things those Natures and Properties and Relations which they possess; and to mankind those Affections which they feel, it must appear

SERM.

I.

to

SERM. to be the Will of God signified by the
I. plainest Indications wrought into our own Nature and that of Things, that we should love one another; and consequently to be a Law inforced upon us by all the Considerations arising from the Pleasure or Displeasure of God. And on the other Hand, we must acknowledge with the third Sort of Writers mentioned before, that the Interests of all Mankind are in some Degree united with those of every particular Man; that their Co-operation is necessary to our Good; and consequently that we should have Reason to love them if it were only for our own Sakes, who could not subsist without them.

Without denying therefore to each of these their proper Force, let us endeavour to draw from every one of them, something that may be serviceable to the Cause of Charity. And accordingly taking this Philanthropy or Love of Mankind to be true under all these Considerations, we say,

That it is wrought into the very Frame of the human Nature.

That it is the Will of God evidently signified in the Constitution of Things.

And

On Charity.

II

And lastly, That our own Self-interest SERM.
rightly understood demands it from us. I.

The Love of Mankind is wrought into the very Frame of our Natures: We are naturally disposed to compassionate the Sufferings of another, as well as to feel our own Sufferings; I don't say in the same Degree, but only with the same Truth: And yet I might almost say in the same Degree in many Instances; as the Sufferings of a Child, a Parent, a Brother, a Friend, our Prince, our Country, where those Affections are strong and kindly. Virtue, and Innocence, and Modesty overborn by Pride, Insolence and Vice, whether in private Persons or publick Communities, give us strong Pangs of Grief and Indignation. Infomuch that a Person wholly devoid of those uniting Affections which would interest him in the Concerns of others, is as truly a Monster in Nature, as one that is born without the Senses of Seeing, Hearing or Feeling. To see a Wretch wholly wrapt up in himself, obdurate and insensible to the Wants and Miseries of his Brethren, that can enjoy
himself

SERM. himself amidst the Distresses of his Fellow

I. Creatures, and feel no Satisfaction from the Prosperity of those around him; I don't know but such an Object is not only more hateful, but more despicable and deform'd than the ugliest of all human Creatures. For the outward Shape does not more truly denominate the Man, than the inward Formation of the Soul: Nay, 'tis the Assemblage of those social Affections that in common Language is call'd Humanity; and a Man devoid of them is term'd inhuman and brutish, and fallen below the Dignity of his Nature. We are concern'd therefore in order to maintain the Honour of our Species, and the Glory and Beauty of the human Frame, which consists in a right Constitution of Soul as well as Body, to cherish within us this common Feeling whereby we are interested in our Neighbour's Sufferings, and feel lively Compunctions at them.

And as the very Nature of the human Constitution requires this from us, so is it plainly the Will of God, who has given us this Constitution: So that in acting
contrary,

contrary to it, at the same Time that we **SERM.**
do Violence to our Natures, we are rebellious **I.**
against our Creator, who has signified
his Pleasure to us in the plainest Characters
engraven upon our Minds: For we agree here as in all other Cases. As the
several Members of our Bodies are all adapted one to the other, and our Bodies
are adapted to the Nourishment we receive from Things without us, and we feel
within us Appetites to this Nourishment, and a Power to provide it by a proper
Use of our Organs; and we justly conclude from these Powers and Appetites,
that God Almighty design'd that we should Support ourselves this Way, and one Part
of us assist towards the Preservation of another for the Good of the Whole: And
as the Tenderness and Ability of the Parent is suited to the helpless State of the
Infant in such manner that it is impossible to doubt but God design'd to provide for
the Infant, by implanting this Instinct, and giving these Powers to the Mother:
So where we see Poverty, Distress, and Affliction of any Kind oppressing any
human

SERM. human Creature, so that he is incapable
I. of helping himself, and we see near him
a Man like him, able to relieve him, and
feeling in his Bosom a Compassion which
prompts him to do it, what can we say
but that these are suited One to the Other?
The Inability and Sufferings of the One
to the Ability and Compassion of the Other,
in the same Manner as the Infant to the
Parent? And that they are thus suited by
God with an Intention that he should act
accordingly? We cannot but suppose from
the infinite Goodness of God, that he de-
signs Happiness for all his Creatures; but
then we must take it in the Way which
he has provided it. He has taken as much
Care of the Well-being of the Infant, as
of a Man in his most perfect Maturity;
but it is by different Ways: To the Man
he has given Powers and Appetites of sup-
porting himself, but for the Infant he has
implanted those Powers and Appetites in
another: But so long as it is done some
how or other, the Goodness of God is the
same to the Infant, and his Care of him
the same, as if he could provide for him-
self;

self; and the Parent in this Case is as much SERM.
 directed and commanded to take this Care, I.
 as every Man to provide for his own Preservation. Just so here God has made Rich and Poor with a Design that they shall both be happy; the Rich by his own Abilities; the Poor, unable of himself, by the Succour of the Rich: And that this may the more effectually be done, he has not only given a Power to the latter, but he has put a Spur in his Breast which will not let him be easy, nor enjoy himself without imparting the Happiness in his Power to his poor Brother; Is not this Disposition of Providence which thus Suits the Poor to the Rich, an evident Mark of the Will of the supreme Orderer of Things? And if we refuse to act in conformity to it, don't we plainly transgress his Law, and render ourselves obnoxious to his Displeasure?

And lastly, It is not only agreeable to our Nature, and to the Will of God, but our own Self-interest loudly calls for it: I don't mean now as it is our greatest and truest Happiness to act conformably to the Perfection

SERM. section of our Nature; and to obtain the
 I Favour of God; and on the contrary, violently to counteract the kindly Impulses of our Affections, and to have Reason to apprehend the Displeasure of our heavenly Father, must create the most immediate Pain and Torture; (for these fall under the two former Considerations) but as one way or other this Cruelty and Hardheartedness to others will operate back upon ourselves, and we shall feel the Effects of it in our own dear Persons. It is certain that if the Rich don't succour the Poor in their Necessities (I speak for those Poor that are made so by God, and such Necessities as his Providence has placed them under, not such as their own Idleness or Vices have brought upon them) if the Rich, I say, don't succour the Poor, the Poor won't honour the Rich; there cannot be expected those Returns of Acknowledgement, Respect and Services which make one great Part of the Advantage of a superior Situation in the World: There will be a considerable Part of a State (for the Poor are always such) who will be
 ill

ill affected to its Welfare, and be glad of SERM.
any Advantages against it: And as the I.
Condition of human Things is, it may

sometimes happen that there may be Opportunities where their Concurrence may be necessary, and their Disaffection be Dangerous, if not Destructive. There are many Instances in History, where an excessive Selfishness of the Rich, and Oppression of the meaner Sort, have burst into Tumults which have ended in Rapine and Plunder, and the Loss of those Treasures which were so inhumanly hoarded. Besides that in Proportion as a Man, from an excessive Attachment to his own personal Interest, separates himself from the Interests of the World, the World is of Course so far separated from him, and excommunicates him from the common Affections of Mankind: And as no Man is able alone to support himself, he is left naked and defenceless, more exposed to Injuries and Insults on every Side, and less able to defend himself against them. Add to this, that Compassion to the Poor, and a Generosity in relieving the Distresses

C

of

SERM. of our Fellow Creatures, is really laying
I. up so much against a Day of Calamity ;
it is treasuring up a Store of Goodness
which is to be paid us back when we
want it ourselves. And however unlikely
that may be at present, yet when we
consider the Frailty of all earthly Enjoy-
ments, the many Examples before our
Eyes of considerable Fortunes sunk into
the Dust there where it was as little ex-
pected as we can now expect it, it will
become us not to lay too great a Depen-
dence upon our present Prosperity, but to
behave so, that in a Reverse of Fortune
we may be conscious of deserving the
same Generosity and Compassion which
we had shewn to others.

Thus it appears upon all Considerati-
ons, which way ever we take it, that
there is a Love due to all Mankind, which
will shew itself differently according to the
Diversity of Relations in which they stand
to us : To the Poor and Afflicted it will
be Compassion ; to the Rich and Great it
will be Honour ; to the general Body of
Mankind

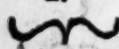
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Mankind it will be a Readiness to do good **SERM.**
Offices, all Civility and Humanity.

And whatever Arguments have been offered for the Love of Mankind, and that Branch of it which we call Compassion to the Afflicted, will equally hold for the actual relieving the Wants of the Afflicted, the actual Communication of some Part of our own Substance for that Purpose. For we are not to think that we can love and pity, and wish well without producing any Fruits of this Love. It is certain, that without this Testimony we may safely conclude all Expressions of Love and Compassion to be nothing but vain Pretences. What St. James ch. ii. says, holds here; *If a Brother or Sister be naked, and destitute of daily Food; and one of you say unto them, Depart in Peace, be you warmed, and filled: Notwithstanding you give them not those Things which are needful to the Body; What does it profit? Where is the Advantage of such a cold dead Charity as this, which hath no Fruits, no Works to accompany it? Nay it is absolutely certain that there can be no Love at all.*

SERM. For let us put the Matter in this Light :

I.  We have so much Love to bestow some where or other ; a great Part of which we lay out as is necessary upon ourselves and our Families, some of it upon our Relations and Friends, some upon our Countries, and some we say ourselves upon the afflicted Part of Mankind : God Almighty has blest us too with a certain Portion of the good Things of the World, which we must necessarily lay out some how or other, and it is certain that we shall give them abroad where we love. Accordingly we spend a great Part of Them upon Ourselves and Families, a great Deal we treasure up for those that come after us ; and by this we give solid and uncontested Proofs of our Love to Ourselves and our Families : We possibly by Entertainments, or Presents, or otherwise, impart to our Friends, and by that means shew in some Proportion that we love them too : But we love and pity the Poor, and give them nothing : Where is the Proportion in this Conduct ? If we loved them as much as ourselves, should not we give them as much ?

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much? If our Compassion to them were **SERM.**
a 10th, a 100th, or a 1000th Part so much **I.**
as the Love to ourselves, should not we
employ a 10th, or a 100th, or a 1000th
Part of our Gains that way? Whatever
be the Proportion of the Love, would not
the Expence bear the same Proportion?
To say therefore that we love Mankind,
and compassionate their Afflictions, when
at the same Time we do nothing to re-
lieve them, is false and absurd, for it would
of Necessity shew itself in a proportionable
Generosity to them.

If we loved our Neighbour as ourselves, I
don't say once more every other single Man
in the same Degree as ourselves, but with
the same Truth and in the same Manner
as ourselves, we should behave to them
something in the same Kind. Now be-
cause we love ourselves, we feed ourselves
when we are hungry; we Cloth ourselves
when we are naked; we warm ourselves
when we are cold: Can we then love our
poor Neighbour that is hungry, and naked
and cold, and not do (I don't say the same,
but) any Thing of this Kind, in any Pro-
portion towards it?

SERM. It is as absolutely necessary that we should

I. love Mankind in some Degree, whatever that be (for I don't determine that) as our very selves, and in that very same Degree it is necessary that we be ready actually to do good and to communicate of our Substance to those who want it: For otherwise how would it be possible to feed and maintain that Love in the Soul, when we did not suffer it to exert itself in any Actions? It must necessarily be wither'd and shrivel'd by little and little, and at length wholly swallow'd up by the enormous Love of ourselves, to which we made all our Sacrifices. And 'tis for that Reason that in all the Religions that have ever been, Men have been requir'd to lay aside a certain Portion of every Year's or every Week's Gains, on purpose to keep alive this Humanity and Compassion to their suffering Brethren. And this gives occasion to consider it as a

Christian Duty: For the Christian Religion is not behind any others in most expressly enjoyning the Practice of Charity. Here give me leave to mention a few

few Passages of Scripture out of many that might be produced to this purpose. SERM.
I.

In the Law of Moses, which, as far as the Reason of it extends, is incorporated with the Gospel, it is said, *Levit. xix.* "Thou shalt not hate thy Brother in thy Heart—but thou shalt love thy Neighbour as thy self:" And this is afterwards in the same Chapter extended to stranger Nations; "If a Stranger sojourn with you in your Land, ye shall not vex him; but the Stranger which dwelleth with you shall be unto you as one born among you, and thou shalt love him as thyself." The same Law is very particular in its Precepts of Charity to the Indigent and Neecessitous: "For they were to leave the Gleanings of their Fields and the Corners of them unreap'd, nay the whole Produce of every Seventh Year for the Benefit of the Poor and Stranger." There needs be mentioned but one Place more, for that comprehends all that can be said; it is in the 15th Chapter of *Deuteronomy*: "If there be among you a poor Man of one of your Brethren,

SERM. " thren, within any of thy Gates, in the

I. " Land which the Lord thy God giveth
 " thee, thou shalt not harden thy Heart,
 " nor shut thy Hand from thy poor Bro-
 " ther: But thou shalt open thine Hand
 " wide to him, thou shalt surely give
 " him; because that for this Thing the
 " Lord thy God shall bless thee in all thy
 " Works, and in all that thou puttest
 " thine Hand unto: For the Poor shall
 " never cease out of thy Land; therefore
 " I command thee, saying, Thou shalt
 " open thine Hand wide unto thy Bro-
 " ther, to the Poor and to the Needy in
 " the Land.

Next let us consider what our blessed Saviour and his Apostles have delivered on this Head, for that concerns us still more nearly. Our Saviour there commands us to give to Those that ask us; he pronounces the Merciful to be blessed, for they shall obtain Mercy; he even obliges us to love our Enemies, to do good to them that hate us; in another Place he calls it his new Commandment, and makes it the distinguishing Badge and Character

On Charity.

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Character of a Christian: "By this shall SERM.

"all Men know that ye are my Disciples,

I.

"if ye love another." St. Paul calls it in

one Place the Bond of Perfection; in ano-

ther he tells us, that Charity is the End

of the Commandment; that our whole

Duty is briefly comprehended in this Say-

ing, "Thou shalt love thy Neighbour as

"thy self; that all other Qualifications

"in the Sight of God are nothing worth

"without Charity: And therefore he di-

"rects *Timothy* to charge those that are

"Rich especially that they do good, that

"they be Rich in good Works, ready to

"distribute and willing to communicate:

He does not excuse even those who

live by their Labour, but orders them

to lay up something in Proportion as

"God has blessed them for this pur-

"pose." And we all know very well,

because we have been told it many Times

over, that our Saviour represents the Pro-

cess of the last Day in such manner as to

lay the great Stress upon Works of Cha-

riety, clothing the Naked, feeding the

Hungry, and the like; And he there de-

termines

SERM. terminates by a final Judgment, the everlasting State of Mankind upon the Practice or Omission of this Duty.

Now what I would observe here is this, God Almighty may sometimes consider us as rational Creatures, and appeal to our own Judgments in a way of Reason and Argument; but there is another Consideration under which we are the Subjects of God, and there he talks to us in a way of Authority, and with the Force of Law. Surely he can want no Title of Sovereignty over us, and consequently he is capable of talking to us in this manner, and he in fact does so in the Holy Scriptures. He there strictly requires us in the most express Terms, and under the severest Penalties, to exercise this Charity and Benevolence to the Neccessitous: He has not left us as under the Law of Nature to reason out our Duty as well as we can, and to guess at his Will by comparing and laying together the several Relations of Things; but he speaks to us in direct Words with all the Plainness and Authority of a Lawgiver: He has made Charity

city the necessary Condition of all the *SERM.*
Privileges of the Gospel: He demands it
from us as a Sacrifice and Homage which
he will accept at our Hands. 

And when we consider how much we
Sacrifice not only to our Necessities or our
Conveniencies, but to our Pleasures, our
Diversions, our Amusements, our Delica-
cies, our Vanities; we can't think it un-
reasonable that God should exact some
small Part of our Substance to be employ'd
upon the Wants and Necessities of our
Christian Brethren. A few Contributions
of this Nature we are apt to think a great
deal, when perhaps put all together they
don't make a fiftieth Part of our Gains,
or sometimes a tenth Part of what we
throw away purely to gratify a Wanton-
ness of Humour, or it may be a vitious
Inclination.

But be that as it will, this once more
is beyond all doubt, that some Portion of
our Estate God requires from us, to be
employ'd in charitable Works, perhaps a
larger one than we now many of us
think, if we would hold up our Heads
with

SERM. with Comfort, when we come to be question'd before our Judge upon that Article:
L Which that we may all do, God of his infinite Mercy grant for Jesus Christ his Sake, to whom with Thee, O Father, and the Holy Ghost, be given all Glory now and ever. *Amen.*



SERMON



S E R M O N II.

On the Usefulness of Charity
Schools.

JAMES V. 20.

*He which converteth the Sinner from the
Error of his Way, shall save a Soul from
Death, and shall hide a Multitude of
Sins.*



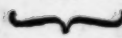
IN this Proposition there are SERM.
two Parts, and each of them II.
capable of a double Interpretation. }
Converting a Sinner
from the Error of his Way, may be un-
derstood of a Person that has been unfor-
tunately

SERM. fortunately misled in any Capital Article
 II. of Faith, and is afterward set right again,
 and brought back into the true Catholick
 Doctrine of the Christian Church: And
 the Words aforegoing seem to lead to
 this Sense, " Brethren, if any among you
 " do err from the Truth, and one con-
 " vert him, let him know that he which
 " converteth the Sinner from the Error
 " of his Way, &c." But when we con-
 sider that there is a Truth in Practice as
 well as in Doctrine, *i. e.* a right Rule laid
 down for Manners as well as Faith; that
 there may be Errors and Deviations in
 one as well as the other; that the Terms
 of Truth and Error are promiscuously
 applied in Scripture to both; and that
 the Word Sinner, though capable of be-
 ing understood either way, yet rather
 inclines to give us a Notion of Prac-
 tice: Upon the whole, all Things confi-
 dered, these two Senses seem to draw so
 equally, that it may be the safer Way to
 accommodate the Difference, by putting
 them both together. There are undoubt-
 edly both in Faith and Practice some es-
 sential Points necessary to constitute a true
 Christian;

Christian; a Deviation from these in either Sense is equally fatal, and must of Course render a Man incapable of all the Benefits of Christianity: He therefore that reclaims and fetches back again such an unhappy Strayer, will be the Man that converteth the Sinner from the Error of his Way. Such a one, the Text tells us, *shall save a Soul from Death, and shall hide a Multitude of Sins.* SERM. II.

Here again, as I observed before, arises another Difficulty; whether the Apostle designs it as an Argument to the Compassion of a Charitable Person, that in so doing he will save the Soul of the Sinner from Death, and efface a Multitude of Sins which otherwise would rise in Judgment against him; or whether it be an Encouragement to this glorious Act of converting Sinners, that a Man shall save his own Soul by it, and procure Pardon for a Multitude of his own Sins and Frailties; or *lastly*, whether saving a Soul from Death refers to the Sinner, and hiding a Multitude of Sins to the Man that converts him: Which of these different Senses is directly intended by St. James, is not easy to

SERM. to determine: But in the mean Time

II.  this is certain, that he which converts a Sinner from the Error of his Way, shall save the Soul of the Sinner from Death by that means, and prevent a Multitude of Sins which otherwise would have been committed: It is further certain that such a noble and generous Employment is highly pleasing to God, and will avail greatly towards procuring his Mercy and Favour to the Benefactor himself. These Things I say are certain upon any Principles of Religion, whatever be the immediate Intention of these Words; and therefore we need not scruple to make use of all the Influence that will arise from either of these Considerations.

As this is a Discourse design'd to excite the Charity of good People towards encouraging and supporting the Education of poor Children in useful Knowledge and Christian Principles, you must give me leave in treating this Subject, to shew,

1st. How converting the Sinner from the Error of his Way is applicable to the Education of Children.

2^{dly},

of Charity Schools.

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2dly, That it is the easiest and most effectual Way of converting a Sinner. SERM. II.

3dly, That the present Circumstances of Christianity above all Things require it from us.

4thly, That it is a Way in which every one is capable of being useful. And

Lastly, I shall enforce it upon you from the Considerations of the Text understood in either Sense.

I begin then with shewing how converting the Sinner from the Error of his Way is applicable to the Education of Children. For when the Apostle talks of converting a Sinner, we are naturally led at first to understand it of grown Persons only, who have admitted gross Corruptions either in Faith or Practice; and not of Children, who bringing with them into the World nothing but Innocence and Simplicity, cannot be suppos'd to fall under this Character of Sinners, or to need a Conversion from the Error of their Ways.

To this I might answer, that we have among us young Sinners, very young ones,

D

who

SERM. who much need a Reformation before they

II.

are come of Age to be put into those Schools which we are now recommending. It is shocking to consider, that Things are so far inverted, "that whereas
" out of the Mouths of Babes and Suck-
" lings, God has heretofore perfected
" Praise; we now hear Oaths and Curses,
" obscene and offensive Words to come
" forth from those little Mouths, and to
" be almost the First Fruits of their Lips,
" the first Words which they speak or aim
" at speaking": The Way at setting out is
often a wrong Way, where the whole is
one Error, and leads to Ruin and Death.
From this Way they need to be recall'd,
and so are become very early Subjects of
Conversion.

But without insisting upon this, how-
ever true it be, supposing them to have
been guilty of no actual Sins or Errors,
yet have not all Children that original
Sin, a corrupted Nature, which is the
Fountain of a Multitude of Sins to come?
Don't they bring with them some Bent
and Inclination, a certain Current of Pas-
sions

fions and Affections, which suffered to run **SERM.**
its own Way, will draw into it all the **II.**

Actions of their future Life? Now as a River may be turned at the Fountain Head, as well as in any other Part of its Channel when it is grown ever so robust, so the human Mind is as truly capable of being converted or turn'd in its first Infancy, and during the first Dawnings of Reason and Speech, as at any other Season of Life. Nay I venture to say that they are then more truly turn'd, because by the Turn they then receive, their whole Life, the whole Stream of their Years to come is set right and in its proper Channel: Whereas if this be done later, it can but Influence what is yet behind, that is, but some Part, another Part that is already past being impossible to be recall'd. There is therefore no way of making a thorough Conversion but by beginning at a Season when the whole is yet to come, by tincturing them very early with good Principles and good Manners, by disciplining them in such manner in their tender Years, that they may afterwards prove

SERM. good Members of the Christian Church,
II. and useful Parts of the Common-wealth.

And this is what is propos'd to be done at the Charity Schools, where poor Children are by the Charity of good Christians taught the first Rudiments of Christian Knowledge contain'd in the Catechism; are used to frequent the Church, and are of Course led to reverent Notions of Almighty God, to have a respect for sacred Things, and a Love to the publick Devotions; they are form'd to a human and decent Behaviour; they are severely corrected for Immoralities, whether in Words or Actions; they learn to read, write, and understand the first Rules of Arithmetick, *i. e.* every thing which may render them capable of exercising the several Trades and Busineses of common Life, and nothing further which may make them wanton or proud, or above the meanest Employments; their Clothing though wholesome, yet, as it ought to be, very plain; their Food such as their poor Parents can afford them; their Learning, as I said, no more than what is solid and generally

generally useful to every State of Life: SERM.

And all this in the Beginning of their II

Days, when they must do this or do nothing at all; when they must either go to School in some Decency and Order, or run about the Streets in a manner Scandalous to the Christian Name, and to all well manner'd Nations; when they must learn to be Christians, or probably continue Heathens, or worse than Heathens ever after. And if this be true, as I cannot doubt but every one must acknowledge that it is true, I am very sure, that putting a poor Child, otherwise incapable of these Advantages, into this way of Education, is converting a Sinner from the Error of his Way, and will intitle a good Christian to all the Glory and Rewards of such a Conversion. And as it appears from what has been said, that this is a true Way of converting a Sinner, so likewise is it.

2. The easiest and most effectual way of Converting him. Youth is that Season of Life when the human Mind is tender and flexible, easily receives an Impression,

SERM. and long retains it: If they suck in Reli-

II. gion, and Virtue, and Industry young,
 they are kindly wrought into their Na-
 tures, so that they become easy and na-
 tural to them, and form Habits which
 will be ever prompting them to Actions
 that are suited to such Principles; And
 as it is commonly said that Habit is a
 second Nature, they will feel themselves
 in a Manner regenerated and form'd anew,
 Whereas when Persons are further advan-
 ced in Age, and are stiffen'd into the Error
 of their Way, whatever it be, it will be
 found upon Trial, to be a very difficult
 Task to reform and turn them. If you
 have some little Effect upon them when
 you take them in a tender Moment, (as
 you sometimes may) yet there is great
 Danger of their soon sliding back again
 insensibly into their old Track; and some-
 times their antient Habit will return with
 a Spring, and push them on more violently
 and desperately than ever: And after all,
 there will still be the same Difference as
 between a Constitution originally Sound,
 and

and one that is mended and patch'd up afterwards by Physick. SERM.
II.

It is a fine Observation of *Plato*, that in those States where there is no publick Regulation of Youth, no steady Rule of Education whereby they shall be set right in the Beginning, and of course fall into the Way of Honesty and Industry, there is a Necessity for an infinite Multiplicity of Laws afterwards to correct all those vitious Humours, which burst out every instant, where the Ground is not rightly settled: Whereas the same Care, or even much less, rightly applied at first, in laying the Foundation of a good Citizen, would much more effectually do the Work. It is much easier, much more noble and workman-like, by infusing good Habits betimes, to prevent Crimes from being committed, than after they are committed, to suppress them by Punishment.

In a Family where there is a good Order establish'd, every Person of course knows his Place and his Duty, and falls into his Business naturally; a little easy Direction is enough. But where there

SERM. is not this Order at bottom, to see the

II. Hurry and Confusion, the Noise, the ill Humours, the mutual Complaints and Uneasinesses, the Vexation and almost Madness that passes from one to another, there cannot be a more unpleasing or unlovely Sight.

Nothing could be more worthy the Care of the Legislature, than to provide that no Person, however poor and mean, should want an Education becoming his rank in Life. They would then scorn Beggary and Rags and Nastiness; abhor Idleness, which is the Mother of all Vices; have a Love for Industry and Cleanliness: And in the Issue, such an Expence laid out properly, would be found to be true Frugality; it would save I know not what Sums which we are now forced to lay out afterwards, and God knows to very little good Use. For after the Habits of Idleness and Sottishness, and Nastiness have taken deep root, and long establish'd themselves in them, they are past the Power of Money to cure; it is but too frequent-ly

of Charity Schools.

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ly employ'd to plunge them still deeper **SERM.**
into those Vices. **II.**

Charity Schools well regulated and duly attended, would ease us of a great Part of this Burden, and leave none to be provided for but those who were truly Objects of Compassion, and made so by the Providence of God. But since there is no publick Provision made in this Matter, it lies more upon the private Generosity of good Christians to take some Care of it. And I am not afraid to say that a good Man may employ himself as acceptably to God in this way of converting Sinners, as if he undertook a solemn Mission for that purpose. For indeed there is no occasion for going abroad to seek Converts, there are Subjects enough for Conversion among ourselves, and particularly among the poorer Sort, where it is but too frequently seen, that there reigns an Ignorance which falls but little short of the grossest Paganism; an Ignorance in the most essential Points of the Christian Religion: There are those who hardly ever name the Names of God or Jesus Christ,
of

SERM. of Heaven or Hell, but to blaspheme by
 II. them ; those who don't indeed want to
 be converted from another Religion, but
 from a State of no Religion at all, who
 neither frequent the publick Offices, nor
 make use of any private Devotions ; in a
 Word, who have hardly any other Title
 to Christianity but their Baptism.

I don't intend by this, that it is any
 way necessary that the lower Part of Man-
 kind should be critically knowing in the
 several Points of Religion ; that they
 should be instructed to talk upon its Depths
 and Mysteries ; that they should be proud
 and self-conceited and disputing ; But sure-
 ly if it be fit that they be Christians at
 all, it is fit that they should know the
 Grounds of Christianity so much at least
 as their Catechism instructs them in ; that
 they should be sensible of some Duty to
 God that made them, some Gratitude to
 Jesus Christ that redeem'd them : And for
 this purpose, it is necessary that they be
 instructed while they are yet tender. This
 is highly reasonable as to the great Du-
 ties of Life and Points of Morality, but
 it

it is still more so with regard to the **SERM.**
Christian Religion: For tho' the former **II.**
be equally important, yet there have been
some found who have affirmed that these
are innate to Man, are wrought into his
Mind by Nature; others who have said
that every Man's own Reason is sufficient
to point them out: But there never yet
was the Man who pretended to say that
the Christian Doctrine was born with any
Man, or that he was sufficient of himself
to work out such a Scheme from his own
Reasoning; If God is to be known by
Nature, to know Jesus Christ certainly
needs positive Teaching and Instruction,
without which it is impossible ever to
attain to it. And this leads to the

3^d Thing proposed, That the present
State of Christianity particularly makes
the Instruction of Children necessary: I
speak of the present State in contradi-
ction to its first Establishment. And
here I am about to say a Thing which is
of great Consequence to explain to us the
Reason of the different Dispensations of
God to Men. When Jesus Christ com-
mission'd

SERM. mission'd his Apostles and first Disciples
 II. to propagate Christianity thro' the World,
 and to convert Sinners from the Error of
 their Ways, it was their Business undoubtedly to direct themselves to Men; to Men in their full Maturity; to Men that were upon quite another Establishment; that had imbibed from their Infancy different Sentiments of Religion, and Maxims of Morality too perhaps something different, at least who had long admitted great Corruptions in Practice. This, as I observed before, was a very difficult Work; a Work indeed beyond the Strength of Man; and accordingly he enabled them with Powers extraordinary. They not only preach'd, (for that they did too) but wrought Miracles: Every Method of Conviction, Human and Divine, was employ'd, and all no more than enough to convert Minds that had already received their Bent: I say no more than enough; and this is plain from the vast Numbers that still withstood the whole Force of this Evidence. At last however it did prevail, and the World submitted. The Establishment

blishment which before had opposed Christianity, was now turn'd in Favour of it. From this Time every Thing that was miraculous ceased: But Christianity was still to remain to the End of the World. What then was to be done? Why the Matter seems pretty plain: The extraordinary Power of God was concern'd to give Christianity an Establishment, but after it was establish'd, it was left to the ordinary and human Methods of Propagation. A Christian Education was to succeed in the Place of Miracle, and indeed will answer all its Ends. This tender and gentle way of instilling the Truths of the Gospel, will operate as effectually upon the Infant-Mind, and give it a Bent in its Favour as surely, as Miracles themselves with all their Pomp and Authority are enabled to prevail over the inveterate Prejudices and contrary Habits of Men full grown. They stand one to the other, we'll suppose, much in the same Manner. And this Supposition, at the same Time that it gives us a noble Prospect of the Uniformity of the Divine Proceedings,
and

SERM. and shews us that his ways are always
 II. equal, and differ only as they are adapted
 to the unequal Circumstances of Man-
 kind; so above all other Considerations, it
 lays home upon our Consciences, the Ne-
 cessity of an early Education in Religion
 and Virtue. For this is really now doing
 what the Apostles heretofore did. It is
 reforming and converting the World: A
 Conversion as truly suited to the present
 Circumstances of Christianity, as that more
 splendid one by Prodigies was then.

And without this were Children to be
 let loose and at random, to do as they
 would, and to think as it happen'd, had
 not they these kindly Prepossessions in Fa-
 vour of Religion and Virtue early wrought
 into them, but we trusted wholly to the
 Force of Preaching and Reasoning to them
 after they were once grown Men, and
 their Passions and Notions were become
 sturdy by Time, we should soon find that
 Preaching by itself would be as insuffi-
 cient to Us as to the Apostles themselves:
 We should need as well as they, Miracles
 besides to render it effectual. So true it is
 that

that a Christian Education is the very way SERM.
 appointed by the Providence of God to II.
 supply the room of those Signs and Won-
 ders that were at first necessary.

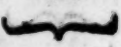
And it is not only under the Christian Dispensation that the Conduct of the Divine Providence leads us into this way of Reasoning. It had been exactly the same under the Jewish. The Law was deliver'd at first to that Nation with the greatest Majesty of Power that can be conceived, and accompanied with Numbers of Miracles to facilitate its first Admission: And all this was necessary to balance the natural Sturdiness of Men. But this once well done, the extraordinary Power was discontinued, and instead of that, they were ordered to teach it to their Children; and their Children to the Generations to come. This was the only way left by which it could be propagated down to all future Time. Just as in the Creation of the Natural World, *Moses* informs us that at first God made every Plant of the Field before it was in the Earth, and every Herb of the Field before it grew, *i. e.* in

SERM. a way wholly miraculous and extraordi-

II. nary : But since that first Creation, every
 Thing has been propagated down in the
 ordinary Way, by Seed and the Culture of
 Man. For the Laws of Providence are
 much the same in the Natural and in the
 Spiritual World : There is nothing super-
 fluous in either. As soon as God has put
 Things into one regular and ordinary
 Course of perpetuating themselves, he
 withdraws those extraordinary Assistances
 as now become useless.

From this it follows, that tho' we are
 no longer capable of converting and re-
 forming the World, and extending our
 holy Religion in the same extraordinary
 way that they did in the first Ages of
 Christianity; yet if we have any true Zeal,
 any hearty and sincere Intentions for the
 Honour of God and his Religion, here is
 still a way left for us to shew it in; a way
 as I observed in the

4th Place; In which every one is ca-
 pable of being helpful. The Work of
 reforming Men and converting Sinners
 grown old in the Error of their Ways,
 besides

besides that it is a very difficult one, is **SERM.**
such that we are not all called to. It par- **II.**
ticularly lies upon the Ministers of the 
Gospel, by their Preaching and Exhorta-
tions, to do what they can in this Way :
And as the Minds of most Men within
the Influence of Christianity are in some
measure prepared to acknowledge their
Authority, and there is a Grace of God
which is promised to these Ordinances
of his own Institution, we ought not to
doubt but it has great Uses : The Magi-
strates have the Care of putting in Ex-
ecution the Laws that are made for the
countenancing Religion and Morality : But
for other private Persons, they have little
to do without the Bounds of their own
respective Families and Dependences. For
to set up for a publick Reformer, without
any Mission or Authority, is a very nice
Affair for any one to conduct without
making himself ridiculous. It is easy to
blame and censure, but it is not easy to
do good by censuring. But here in this
Conversion of the World, by promoting
the good Education of poor Children,
E every

SERM. every Body is capable of doing Service.

II. 'Tis but to impart some small Part of the
Substance wherewith God hath blest us
for that Purpose.

And here again we may observe, that this is the proper and natural Way of doing Good that belongs to us at this Time. Heretofore it was to be done by the miraculous Zeal of some great Heroes in Religion, Apostles, and Martyrs, and Confessors, Men who despised all Dangers, neglected all private Considerations of Themselves, Families, or Countries, and devoted themselves wholly to this divine Employment of converting Sinners: And this was then necessary, for it could not otherwise be done. The Want of publick Encouragement, or rather the Opposition and Discountenance they met with from the Powers of the World, called for it. But now that the State of Things is alter'd, and the World is become Christian, this Apostolical and Supernatural Zeal of some few ought to be turn'd into a steady, even, sober Desire in All Persons to promote the Honour of God in their .

their respective Stations. Where they spent SERM.
their Blood with Pleasure, we should cheer- II.
fully lay out some little Part at least of
our Gains. Thus an easy Contribution of
all, may, as Things are, be equivalent to
those more violent Strains of the first
Christians. For we are not to imagine
that the Face of Things is so wholly
changed, that we are not charged with
any of these Duties which were incum-
bent even upon the Apostles themselves:
We are as much obliged to love and ho-
nour God as they were, tho' this Love
and Honour are to be express'd differently
in Proportion to the Circumstances of the
Church: Gifts may fail; Prophecies may
fail; but Charity never fails: It is an eter-
nal Duty from which we can never be
excused. It may be shewn in different
Ways, but it must always be Real and
Sincere: And if it be so, it will ever ex-
ert itself in some visible Effects.

And indeed if we consider it, how is
it possible to have any internal Reverence
for Jesus Christ, any real Sense of the in-
numerable Benefits which he hath pur-

SERM. chased for us, without being willing to

II. communicate them to our poor Brethren?

Especially when it may be done at so cheap a rate as the Sacrifice of a little Money, which some of us would otherwise never use at all; which others would throw away without Scruple upon a thousand Vanities, Amusements or Delicacies, if not Luxuries and Extravagancies; which almost all of us lay out one way or other in Things of much less Importance.

With all this Reason therefore on our Side, we think we cannot doubt of Success, when we thus apply to the Charity of all good Persons for the Support of those decaying Schools which are destined to these pious Uses. They will act, we hope, with a truly Christian and humane Spirit, and shew their Love to Religion and Virtue, their Regard to the Honour of God and the Good of Men, some by Subscriptions, some by present Contributions, some more and some less, every one in the Expression of *St. Paul*, according as God hath blest him, and as he can spare from the Necessities of Life: And those who are incapable

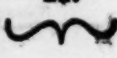
incapable of any thing further, will assist SERM.
II.
us with their Prayers and good Wishes, which they need not doubt but God will graciously accept. One Thing I am sure of, and in a former Discourse I endeavour'd to convince you by many Reasons both of Nature and Scripture, that God expects and demands from us, that we exert some Charity in Proportion to our Abilities: And the Education of poor Children in such manner as to make them good Christians and honest industrious Men, is in all respects the best and most reasonable Charity that I know.

This is the Design of these Schools; a Design to be sure most excellent in itself, most worthy of a Christian Nation, and as I have shewn, nearest approaching to the Spirit of those great Men who first converted the World. The Execution of this Design I will not affirm to be intirely without Objection, because I know nothing Human that is so; but I can truly say that I know none considerable, and I believe I may speak for the general Body of the Subscribers, that they are open to

SERM. Information, and will be very thankful
 II. to any one that can shew them any Abuses,
 or propose any Methods of making it
 more useful.

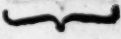
But in the mean Time, were it ever so much without Objection, it would still find Objectors; such is the Calamity of human Minds, which at present I chuse not so much to blame as to deplore. For of how many noble Actions do we lose the Glory, what fair Opportunities do we miss of obtaining the Favour of God, and laying up Treasures of Beatitude in Heaven, from Reasons which I am afraid will hardly stand the Test to our own impartial Thoughts, much less when they come to be weighed in those Scales of Truth, in which every Thing must once be weighed before God?

But however, after all, where Men cannot be perswaded to believe this Design good or rightly executed, where they know or think they know a better way of employing their Charity, they must at last be govern'd by their own Thoughts its certain, and in God's Name let them
 give

give that better way ; but still let them SERM.
give: For the Necessity of Charity still sub- II.
sists, whatever becomes of this : Let them 
give, I say, somewhere or other, and not
(as it is to be fear'd that some do) eternally
make Objections to this and another, and
a third Thing, with no other view but to
excuse themselves from giving at all upon
any Occasion whatever. And I add, that
they ought to give in such manner that
the World may be sensible that they do
give, so much as is becoming their Station
in the World ; for thus much they owe
to their own Character as Christians, and
to the Edification of a good Example.
As for any extraordinary Charities indeed,
those it may be proper to confine within
our own Knowledge, and to the Eyes of
him who seeth in secret ; But so much
Light as is necessary to make Men glorify
our Father which is in Heaven, ought to
shine out before Men.

Give me leave now to add a few Words
arising from the Considerations mention'd
in my Text, and I have done. Let him
know, says our Apostle, let a Man be

SERM. well assur'd that he which converteth the
II. Sinner from the Error of his Way, shall
save a Soul from Death, and shall hide a
Multitude of Sins. If this be meant of
the Sinner himself, it is then, as I said
before, an Argument to the Compassion
of every good Man, that in converting a
Sinner, he will save a Soul from Death,
and hide a Multitude of Sins: And this
understood in the particular Application
which we have made of these Words will
signify, that he which contributes to the
Education of a poor Child, contributes
to save a Soul from Death. Good God!
How serious and affecting is this Consi-
deration! A Child, which without this
Assistance might possibly Perish, run into
Ignorance and Idleness, and Vices and
Crimes, and perhaps even into an infam-
ous Death in this World, as well as
into that second and more dreadful Death,
the Death of the Soul in the next; this
seasonable Charity intervening shall hide
this Multitude of Sins, hide them in the
noblest Manner, not by effacing them af-
terwards, but by suppressing them in their
very

very Birth, and not suffering them to SERM.
come forth into Being at all ; shall II.
give him a comfortable Subsistence here, 
and a blessed Immortality hereafter. It
will be the Subject of his eternal Praises
to God, that this happy Turn was given
to his whole Being.

And then in the other Consideration
in which these Words may be taken, as
an Encouragement or Reward promised
to the charitable Man who has assisted in
the Conversion of a Sinner, how strong is
the Motive that a Multitude of his Sins
shall be cover'd ! That is, in the Scripture
Language, that God will forgive that Man
many Sins and Frailties which he may
have been led to commit. Such a gene-
rous Zeal for the Glory of God, and the
Good of Mankind, will strongly plead in
his Favour with Almighty God, and dis-
pose him mercifully to forgive his Sins,
and to give him all those Graces which
are necessary to qualify him for Forgive-
ness : And if this be so, I am sure it ought
to be a powerful Incitement to us all ; for
we have all a Multitude of Sins which
need

SERM. need to be cover'd, and we shall be very
II. glad hereafter of any Argument, any Title
which we can offer to the Mercy of God.

There is a Passage in *Daniel* xii. somewhat to the same Purpose with this of *St. James*, with which I shall conclude;
“ They that turn many unto Righteous-
“ ness shall shine as the Stars for ever and
“ ever.” God grant we may all do so,
for Jesus Christ his Sake, to whom with
the Father and the Holy Spirit be given
all Glory now and ever. *Amen.*





S E R M O N III.

On the Evils of Anarchy.

JUDGES xxi. 25.

*In those Days there was no King in Israel :
Every Man did that which was Right
in his own Eyes.*



HIS is an Observation frequently repeated in the latter Part of this Book. Where the

SERM.
III.

Author has been relating, or is going to relate some horrible Instance of Corruption and Depravity of Manners, he takes Care to observe that it happen'd when
“ there was no King in *Israel*, and every
“ Man

SERM. "Man did that which was Right in his

III. "own Eyes." There is not in History
 a more shocking Proof of the Evils of
 Anarchy and Confusion, than the Story
 which he had been mentioning in the
 three last Chapters of this Book, of which
 the Text is the Conclusion. The most
 detestable Excesses of Lust and Debauchery
 punish'd by a dreadful civil War,
 which almost intirely cut off one of the
 Tribes of *Israel*. In the Story before of
Micah and his Images, we have observed
 to us by the holy Penman, the same fatal
 Consequences of Anarchy upon Religion;
 and to what a strange Degree of Corruption
 Men soon come, when they do every
 one that which is Right in his own Eyes;
 and, as it is express'd in the xviiith Chapter,
 "There is no Government or Magistrate
 in the Land that may put them
 to shame in any Thing." So that the
 Observation holds good universally with
 regard to Religion, Morality, the Enjoyment
 of our Lives and Properties, every
 Thing that is good and valuable amongst
 Men; that where there is no King, no
 Govern-

Government, but every one is permitted **SERM.**
to follow the Sight of his own Eyes, and **III.**
to do what he pleases, there nothing is to
be expected but a monstrous jumble of
Truth and Falshood, Right and Wrong,
Virtue and Vice, Religion and No-Reli-
gion, Impiety, Injustice, Murder, Distrac-
tion, and every evil Work.

As this therefore is a Day appointed by
Authority to commemorate the Mercy of
God to this Nation in the Restoration of
our antient Establishment both in Church
and State, from a Condition of Anarchy
and Confusion, I thought no Subject could
be more proper to discourse on than this
which I have chosen; which will natu-
rally lead us to consider the Benefit of
Government, and the Evils of No-Gov-
ernment, where every Man without any
Restraint does that which is Right in his
own Eyes. And accordingly from these
Words I shall,

Ist, Shew that where Mankind are left
every Man to do what is Right in his own
Eyes, and to follow his own private Gui-
dance

SERM. dance and Direction, there they certainly

III. go Wrong. And from thence,

2dly, Prove the Necessity of Government to lay a Restraint upon those Wandrings and Deviations from Right by Laws, and a regular Administration of Justice.

1st Then I am to shew, that where Mankind are left every Man to do what is Right in his own Eyes, and to follow his own private Guidance and Directions, there upon the whole they infallibly go Wrong. It might seem otherwise at first Sight: For since every Man's Eyes were undoubtedly given him to point out to him the Way in which he should walk, and every Man's Judgment to guide his own Actions, it might seem that a Man could not do better, nor act more agreeably to the Design of his Creator, than to follow those Guides which he has given him, those innate Directors which every Body carries about with him. And if it should be otherwise order'd that a Man should be deceived and misled by those natural Lights which God has implanted
into

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into him, it might look like a hard Con- SERM.
stitution of Things, and throw some Re- III.
flection upon its Author. This Sort of

Reasoning has appear'd so plausible, and
especially of late Years, that it has become
the favourite Subject of the Age, and a
great deal of Eloquence has been em-
ploy'd to give it all manner of Advantages.

And to do it Justice, it is that View of
Mankind which is naturally first in Con-
ception. In considering Man, we first
consider him Sound and Right, sufficient
to his own Perfection and Happiness, *i. e.*
so much as belongs to the human Nature.
If we represent him otherwise, as depraved
and corrupted, and insufficient to his Hap-
piness, it cannot be, because it is the na-
tural View of Man; but because we are
obliged by the Force of Truth and Expe-
rience, to represent him so as in Fact we
find him. Just as in considering the Way
from Point to Point, the first Conception
is a strait Line, for that is the shortest and
most natural; and if we go out of it to
pass thro' a crooked and indirect one, it
must be by Violence and the Force of
some

SERM. some Circumstances which in Fact have

III. turn'd it out of its right Course. I agree
 therefore so far, that in Notion the Per-
 fection and Sufficiency of Man to his own
 Good is very conceiveable, and indeed the
 first and most natural Conception which
 we frame of him: And the Consequence
 of that would be, that he ought to follow
 his own Sense, and be govern'd by his
 own Inclinations and Aversions, which
 would upon this Supposition lead him
 right to pursue his Good and avoid his
 Evil.

This is that State of Integrity and Per-
 fection in which the Scripture represents
Adam to have been before the Fall, as he
 came out of the Hands of God: A State
 in which there could be no occasion for
 Government or any foreign Restraint, since
 there is supposed a Self-check, a natural
 right Ballance in the Breast, whereby he
 is prompted to think and act right: In a
 Word, Man under this Consideration is
 every one under the best Government in
 the World, for he is his own Governor,
 and perfectly well qualified for that Post.

This

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This is that Golden Age of Man which SERM.
the Poets so much delight to dwell upon: III.

And 'tis upon this Bottom that is built the Scheme of some late Writers against Christianity, who have never done magnifying the Reason of Man and the whole System of human Nature, in order to prove Revelation useless. And they are right enough in their Conclusion. For if this be really the true State of Things, and every Man's own Reason be sufficient to direct him, and his Passions be either well ballanced of themselves, or tame enough to submit to the Government of his Reason; if this be so, I say, then there can be no Occasion for Revelation either to guide and improve the Reason, or to regulate the Passions: And in the same Manner we may prove that there is no Occasion for human Laws or human Government; and if there be the same well-constituted Balance in the Body as the Mind, there can be no Occasion for Physick; nor in short for any of those Helps and Remedies which the Wisdom of God and Man has provided for us: For they all suppose some Defect in

F

Man

SERM. Man of himself, something wrong which
 .III. these are design'd to rectify. Once more
 { therefore we don't blame these Men for
 any Inconsistency of Scheme ; for if every
 Thing in Man were right and in good
 order, they argue rightly that Revelation
 and every Kind of Government, Divine
 and Human, would be only an Incum-
 brance, a heavy Yoke and unreasonable
 Restraint upon the natural Liberty of every
 single Man.

But what is amazing to consider, and
 shews the prodigious Effect of a blinded
 Mind is this, that they can look round
 upon the World, and take a full Survey
 of Mankind ; or if they could not do that,
 that they can converse with themselves
 and their own Breasts ; and at the same
 Time pronounce Man singly in that State
 of Perfection, which is to be a necessary
 Ground for their projected Reformation.
 One would imagine that such a Notion
 of Mankind, must proceed from those
 who had lived all their Days in a Closet,
 secluded from any Acquaintance with the
 World, and who had never been conscious

in

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in themselves either of Ignorance or irregular Passions, which needed good Information or wholesome Restraints. SERM.
III.

But however that be, this we may venture to leave to any Man of common Sense and Ingenuity, whether of the Two is the Truth of Things, and a proper Groundwork to proceed upon; That of these Men we are talking of, who suppose in Man a Perfection of Nature, or That of Religion which goes upon a Foundation of Departure from Perfection greater or less in every Man that is born into the World: If the former, why then indeed the Religion of Nature is sufficient, *i. e.* so much Duty as we can make out to ourselves from the pure Strength of our own Reason, and so much Restraint as will naturally grow from that perfect Ballance of the Affections which is establish'd in ourselves: But if the latter be true, we ought to be thankful to God and Man for those other Assistances and Remedies whereby our Minds are enlighten'd, and our Affections either encourag'd or check'd by external Considerations, in such

SERM. wise as is most proper to restore us to our

III. lost Ballance within, and to conduct us to our own Good.

And 'tis for that Reason that *St. Paul*, before he undertakes to establish his Doctrine of the Righteousness of God, which is by Faith in Jesus Christ, is very careful to prove that both *Jews* and *Gentiles* are all under Sin; "that there is none Righteous, no not one; to the End that every Mouth may be stopped, and all the World may become guilty before God." This and a great deal more may be seen in the 3^d Chapter of his Epistle to the *Romans*: Which all comes to this, "that all Mankind falls short of Perfection or Righteousness in greater or less Degrees." For till this Principle be admitted, till we are brought to acknowledge that we want the Righteousness of the Law, the Perfection which should be according to the first Law and Standard of the human Nature, in vain shall we be perswaded to accept the Righteousness of God which he has provided for us by Jesus Christ.

We

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We may safely conclude therefore with **SERM.**
the Apostle, and with every Man that has **III.**
made an Observation of the World as in
Fact it is, that there is none Righteous,
not one that comes up to the Standard
of the Law, and therefore not one that
can by his own Righteousness lay claim
to the Happiness which belongs to the
Observance of it. For where there is
wanting a perfect Righteousness, there
must of Course be wanting a perfect Hap-
piness, and in the same Proportions. How
there should come this general Distortion,
so that the Reason should be enfeebled and
deprived of its natural Sovereignty, and
the several Affections and Faculties of the
Soul and Body should have lost that happy
Ballance, which, by a regular and well-
poized Counter-Action for ever preserved
them Sound and in Health, is a Point
which I don't at present enter into. It is
sufficient to my present Purpose, that Men
are all more or less corrupted, and I shall
shew it in two Instances only, which have
been frequently hinted at before,

In the Reason or Understanding:

In the Passions or Affections.

SERM.

III.

The Understanding of Man as it is at present, is incapable of guiding him surely towards his Happiness. We all complain, and with Reason, of the narrow Confines of our Understanding: I don't mean that we have any Reason to complain that we have not infinite Capacities; that is the Prerogative of God only, and Man in any State of Perfection has no Reason to expect, nor is indeed concern'd to have it. But such a Knowledge of Things, so much Understanding as is necessary to procure his own Good, undoubtedly belongs to Man, and he is deeply concern'd to have it: When two Ways lie before him, one of which leads to Good, and the other to Evil, or one to a greater Good, and the other to a Less, so much Reason as will direct him to chuse the Good and refuse the Evil, belongs surely to him, and to none else. But yet this we want, as we must be all but too sensible. How frequently do Cases happen every Day of our Lives, where, if left to ourselves with our best Reasoning, we shall not be able to extricate the Truth and assure our Conduct?

So

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So that from the pure Deficiency of our Reason, if there were nothing else to draw us aside, we should of ourselves be incapable of providing for our own Happiness.

SERM.
III.

But this is not all ; for we have Passions and Affections of many Kinds within us, which are both perverted and headstrong. As our Understanding is turn'd towards Truth and from Error, and yet by being situated awry we take a wrong Aim, and frequently mistake one for the other ; so tho' the general Bent of our Affections be towards Good and from Evil, tho' we love and pursue the one, and hate and avoid the other ; yet they are often so strangely perverted, that we love and hate with very little Reason ; love a Trifle, and prefer it in our Choice before the most substantial Good ; we express the utmost Aversion to the slightest Inconveniences, at the same Time that we are wholly indolent or but little concern'd at the greatest of all Evils ; and when we are bent one way or the other, we are beyond all the Power of Reason to reclaim. Present Objects carry

SERM. us away with such Violence ; present Plea-

III. fures and present Pains so possess our Souls, that we are not at Liberty to give to absent and future Ones their due Weight : Tho' our Reason remonstrates to us ever so strongly the Folly of Sacrificing the Happiness of our future Life to the Pleasure of the present Moment, of refusing a present Pain or Inconvenience, when so small an Expence will purchase an Exemption from Misery for a great while to come, yet too frequently the Passion for Objects just before us prevails beyond the strongest Reasons.

Another Fountain of Depravity in our Affections is the Violence of Self-Love. Self-Love if rightly understood and under due Regulations, is not only the most necessary, but the most reasonable and useful Thing in the World, and hardly differs from that Love of Good which we mentioned before, and is a Perfection which still maintains itself under all the Corruption of our Natures. Self-Love rightly pursued would direct us to seek our own Interest and Happiness in that of our Neigh-

Neighbour; because our own Interest is **SERMON**
by the singular Workmanship of Heaven so **III.**
inwrapped and intwisted with the Interest
of our Fellow-Men, of that Brotherhood
and Society with which we live, that the
Moment we endeavour to separate them,
and to build our own Fortunes upon an
independent Foundation, we then are sap-
ping and undermining them.

What would have been the State of
Things if Man had maintain'd his Inno-
cency, we cannot now determine. It is
easy to conceive either of these two: Ei-
ther that every Man or Family of Men
would have been sufficient to their own
Necessities and Conveniencies and De-
fence without any Assistance from a larger
Society, or that a mutual Intercourse of
Services and Benefits between large Soci-
eties of Men, or even the whole Race of
Mankind, would then as now have been
necessary to give him all the Happiness
he was capable of enjoying. In the latter
Case, every single Man would from the
pure Rectitude of his own Nature, his
own Right Reason, or his own Affections
rightly

SERM. rightly ballanced, do every Thing which

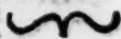
III. in his Situation would best contribute to the
 ~~~~~ Good of the Whole, and of Consequence  
 enjoy himself the Benefit of this blessed  
 Constitution: So that every Man would  
 best provide for his own Interest, by thus  
 acting in Concert for the Good of the  
 Whole. Thus there would be no Difference  
 between Self-Love and the most  
 generous Love of Mankind, no Difference  
 between private Interest and the publick  
 Weal.

But it is one unhappy Effect of the  
 Corruption of Man, that these two Things  
 which naturally are united, are now separated  
 one from the other, and have taken different  
 Routs. Self-Love is now become a narrow  
 contracted Thing, and means no more than a  
 strong Passion to procure our own Pleasures  
 or Advantages, without any Regard and in  
 Contradistinction to those of our Brother.  
 And the Consequence of this is, that as every  
 Man pursues an End of his own and by ways  
 of his own Devising, without any common  
 Rule or general Concert, we are for  
 ever

ever thwarting and crossing, and running  
against one another: In order to gain my  
Aim, I must defeat another's; and hence  
Angers, Hatreds, Revenges, Murders, and  
every Thing that is most shocking and  
terrible to human Nature. Such at pre-  
sent is the Depravity and ill Turn which  
our Passions have taken; so that in the  
present State of them, were our own Rea-  
son ever so right, ever so perfect, as it is  
not, it would not be sufficient to controll  
their Extravagancies. And consequently  
were we left every Man to do what is  
Right in his own Eyes, to follow his own  
Direction, *i. e.* to do what he pleases,  
whatever his Passion prompts him to,  
such and so terrible would be the State  
of Things as we have described. And  
therefore 'twas with good Reason that  
the sacred Writer, when he proposed to  
give some Account of the most horrible  
Degeneracies that were ever heard of,  
resolved it into their want of Government  
and Order among them. It was at a Time  
when "there was no King in *Israel*, but  
" every Man did that which was Right  
" in

SERM.

III.





SERM. "in his own Eyes." And from hence I

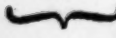
III. proposed to prove in the

2<sup>d</sup> Place, the Necessity of Government to lay a Restraint upon these Wandrings and Deviations from Right, by Laws, and a regular Administration of Justice. There are two Excesses into which Men sometimes slide upon this Head. One that which I have mentioned before, where too much Perfection is allowed to every single Man, so much as to render Government absolutely of no Use or Signification. For it would be really of no Use, were Men singly from themselves able and disposed to think and do Right without any Information or coercive Power. And yet thus it is that Writers of this Kind represent Men even living in the midst of Government, as having in Effect a Right to perfect Liberty of judging and acting. For no Government, say they, has a Right to establish Falshood or enact Wrong; and where they do so, every Subject is justified in refusing Obedience. This is Demonstration, they tell us. And indeed it is so understood in its strictest Sense:

For

For all the Authority in the World ought **SERM.**  
not to make me believe what is really **III.**  
false, or to do what is really wrong. And   
accordingly if we could suppose every Man  
to have sent him down that perfect Stan-  
dard of Truth and Right which God keeps  
in Heaven, he would then have nothing  
to do to regard the Laws of Men, but  
immediately to measure every Thing by  
that Standard. But I suppose Subjects can  
no more pretend to that, than their Go-  
vernors; either Both have it or Neither:  
If Governors have it as well, then it comes  
to the same, and we shall have no Laws  
but what are Right. But Neither have it,  
we'll say. What then is the Meaning,  
let us inquire again, of that Demonstra-  
tion, that the Government has no Right  
to enact Wrong? That the Government  
has no Right to enact what I or any other  
Subject thinks Wrong? This Sounds a  
little Harsh: But suppose it. What then  
has the Government Authority to do? To  
make good Laws to be sure; to enjoin us  
to do what is Right, *i. e.* what we think  
Right. But put the Case that I or any  
common

SERM. common Man should command another

III.  to what is Right, or what he thinks so, ought he not to obey me as much as the Government? For he obeys neither one nor the other, any farther than he thinks that Right which is commanded: And how then does the Authority of Government differ from my Authority, or from no Authority at all? All Government therefore is absurd, and not to be accounted for upon a Supposition that every single Man is fit to be trusted with the Government of Himself, and is a sufficient Judge of Right and Wrong, and well enough disposed to follow his own Judgment. Government proceeds upon another Bottom, that Mankind in its present corrupted State needs other Motives to do Right than what proceed from Himself: That the Ignorance of his Understanding, the Turbulence of his Passions, the Violence of Self-Love, make it very unfit for him to be his own Judge, and unsafe to be left without Contrall to the impetuous Sallies of a headstrong Will. This therefore is one Excess, to place so much Perfection

fection in Man as is inconsistent with **SERM.**  
Government. **III.**

Another Excess is, when the Depravity of Man is described to be too great ; in-  
somuch that there is supposed a total  
Overthrow of all Principles of Right and  
Truth ; an absolute Degeneracy and Per-  
versity in the Mind, and all its Faculties :  
So that if we were to take our Notions of  
Man from the Picture of him drawn by  
this Sort of Authors, we must suppose him  
to be wholly inverted and turned upside  
down. They seem not to conceive this  
Corruption as an unhappy shock whereby  
Objects stand something awry, and in an  
indirect Position to the Mind ; but that  
the Mind is turned quite about, so that  
it chuses Error rather than Truth, and  
Evil before Good. This they do with a  
Design to render us more docil and hum-  
ble, and better disposed to receive such  
Lights as shall be afforded us, and to sub-  
mit to such Laws as shall be imposed upon  
us from without. But the Principle they  
go upon is both false in itself, and form'd  
intirely to defeat its own Intention. It is  
false,



SERM. false, because the Nature of Man in fact  
III. is not so degenerated, but that upon the  
whole it Aims at Truth and loves Good,  
tho' it is often deceived by Appearances,  
and misled by I know not what Caprices  
of Passion: And it defeats itself, because  
if it were true, it must for that Reason  
appear to us false; and every Remedy  
which the Goodness of God might provide  
for us, must for that Reason be to us  
inverted, and appear Poison. Besides  
that if we could suppose the Ground of  
every single Man to be Evil, Government  
and Society instead of curing it would  
render that Evil more certain and infallible:  
For whatever Advantage Evil had  
beyond Good in one Man, that Advantage  
would be greatly strengthened by its being  
united into a large Body.

We must have a Care therefore how  
we represent the Corruption of Man so  
strongly as to make it the prevailing Principle  
of the Mind. We have all sinned  
its true, and deviated from the Law of  
Right in different Proportions; but still  
there are such Remains of Rectitude in  
the

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he Mind by which we may know that SERM.  
ve have sinned, and which, if we make III.  
he right use of them, will dispose us to  
except with Thankfulness all those Me-  
hods of Remedy which are proper to re-  
air our fallen Condition; we have so  
much Reason as will shew us the Benefit  
f Government to that End. In short,  
ill Truth has in general an Advantage  
bove Error, and Good above Evil, in every  
articular Mind, and however small be  
hat Advantage, it will discover itself vi-  
bly in a Society of Men, so that it will  
ecome vastly more difficult for a large  
Community to pursue its Ruin.

Hence arises the Benefit of Govern-  
ment, both with Regard to the Under-  
standing and the Passions. The Defects  
f the Understanding it rectifies by the  
ublick Judgment, to which every single  
Understanding contributes its Share. For  
he publick Sense may be conceived to  
e compounded from the Observation and  
Experience of every Member, and depo-  
ted in the Government as a common  
stock, from whence after a proper Di-  
G gession

SERM. gestion it comes abroad again in the Form

III. of Laws for the Use and Direction of the  
 ~~~~~ several Members. This is a Kind of political Circulation, as necessary to the Life and Health of a Body Politick, as is the Circulation of the Blood and Juices to the Subsistence of the natural Body. The very same Blood which the Heart receives from the Veins, it gives abroad into the Arteries; so here the very same Sense, Strength and Support which the Government affords to every single Member, it receives itself from the several Members which constitute it, and the Government is no other than a Kind of Reservoir, where it is laid up to be distributed back again in its several just Proportions.

The Irregularities of the Passions it remedies by Fears and Hopes, Rewards and Punishments, which properly placed are so many Springs or Weights added from without, where there is occasion either to quicken or slacken the Motions: And so where the natural Ballance is wanting, there are so many additional Helps to remedy the Irregularity of it. This is

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a way of curing the Passions by the Pas- SERM.
sions, one Fear and one Hope by another III.
Fear and another Hope, the Fear of doing
our Duty by the Fear of omitting to do
it, or by the Hope of being rewarded for
doing it.

You remember what was said before concerning Society in a State of Innocence, that every Man purely from the Rectitude of his own Nature would in his Situation act for the common Good: The Perfection of Government is to order Matters so by a right Application of Hopes and Fears, of external Rewards and external Punishments, that every Member shall for his own Interest be obliged to promote the common Good. This is what every Government Aims at, for this would be a complete Remedy to the Corruptions we complain of in single Men, but what none can perfectly attain to, for want of being itself perfect. Great however, vastly great is the Restraint which Government, imperfect as it is, lays upon the vicious Inclinations of Men: We hardly any of us know the full Extent of its Usefulness. For

SERM. having been all born and having all lived

III. with this happy Controll upon us, we are
 not sensible what we should have been
 without it, and into what monstrous Enor-
 mities we might have burst, had we been
 left to follow every Man the Sight of his
 own Eyes, and not been kept firmly in
 by this strong Bond which Government
 puts upon us. But tho' we can't be so
 well assured of it in our own Persons, yet
 we have sufficient Demonstration of it as
 well from the general Nature of Man
 unrestrain'd, as from the History of past
 Times when Anarchy and Confusion has
 reign'd. The Times particularly which
 preceded that happy Restoration of our
 ancient Establishment which we this Day
 commemorate, will afford us abundant
 Proof.

There had been Complaints of some
 Abuses crept into the Government of
 Church and State, and perhaps justly too:
 Many honest Men at least thought so, and
 spoke aloud for Redress. At length they
 had Redress, and should have been easy.
 But this not being to be done but by
 slackening

On the Evils of Anarchy. 85

slackening in some Measure the Reins of SERM.
Government, gave of Consequence a pro- III.
portional Loose to the Mind. Now those

that were originally evil-minded begun to appear forth and discover themselves, and those who went in at first with good Intentions, feeling this Loose, begun to perceive some Principles which before had lain concealed even from themselves. Hence the Seeds of Intrigues half-formed, ambitious Projects in Embryo, obscure Designs of Encroachment and Usurpation, some distant Views of an Alteration in Church and State: This enlarged their Uneasiness and Discontent: Demands rose higher and higher, and at last grew intolerable. From thence a civil War and all its Evils, Murders, Devastations, Ruin and Destruction. This gave room for Projects of every Kind to grow: Some now were openly for a total Change of Government, a Republican State and a Republican Church; others had every one a private Design of his own full formed, and waiting only for Opportunities to give.

SERM. it Birth. But still there was some Check,

III. for there was yet a King in *Israel*: At
length the King was murdered in cold
Blood; the last Bond was broken, the
Knot and Center of the Civil Union dissol-
ved, and Confusion burst out in all its
Forms; a Thousand Parties in State, and
Ten Thousand Sects in Religion: Every
Man projected and reformed, and did
what was Right in his own Eyes. No
Image can better express such a Condi-
tion, than that of a Dead Animal in a
State of Putrefaction; when instead of
one noble Creature, as it was when Life
held it together, there are Ten Thousand
little nauseous Reptiles growing out of
it, every one crawling in a Path of its
own.

But as this is properly no State of
Things, but only a Passage or Transition
which Nature makes use of, when there
is to be a Change from one into another,
this gave way to a Usurper; and then
Exactions, Oppressions, and Executions,
in all Parts of the Kingdom: And the
Man

Man is not to be blamed for this, for SERM.
Machiavel had plainly shewn him that III.
they are necessary to support a Usurpa-
tion. For it is nonsense to suppose that
we can arrive at an evil End by fair and
justifiable Means. If a Man is bent upon
usurping a Power that does not belong
to him, God has provided no honest Way
to come at it, but he must pass thro'
a Scene of Falshood, Injustice, Oppres-
sion and Blood: And this above all Things
shews the Evil of Usurpation, which makes
all Sorts of Crimes necessary.

This Tyranny was followed by another
Confusion as great as that before; till
at length God Almighty having, it is to
be hoped, sufficiently punished us for our
Sins, and convinced us for some Ages
at least of the Evils of Anarchy, took
Compassion on us as upon this Day,
and restored to *Israel* the rightful King,
and with him the antient Constitution
in Church and State, which God be praised
continues to this Day.

I know very well it is a delightful
Theme with some to dwell upon those

SERM. Times of Usurpation and Rebellion ; that
 III. there were never greater Men, nor *Eng-*
 land ever in that Height of Glory. And
 very probably it may be true, for there
 is a great deal of Reason that it should be
 so. The most consummate Evils can be
 executed by none but the greatest of
 Men. Add to this that Hospitals and
 the most distempered Places will of Course
 make the best Physicians : And Times
 of Distraction and civil Wars will for
 the same Reason make the ablest Intri-
 guers and the stoutest Soldiers ; and all
 Vices whatsoever have some Benefits ac-
 cruing some how or other from them.
 This is sufficient Reason for us to ad-
 mire this well-ordered Constitution of
 Things, by which God Almighty brings
 some Good out of every Evil, but ought
 by no means to make Distemper, Con-
 fusion and Vice amiable or desirable
 Things.

Let us therefore join in Thanks to
 Almighty God for restoring as at this
 Time our antient Constitution in Church
 and

On the Evils of Anarchy. 89

and State, and preserving it safe to us **SERM.**
home to this Day. May the same good **III.**
Providence deliver it down to late Ge-
nerations, for Jesus Christ's Sake, to whom
with Thee, O Father, and the Holy
Ghost, three Persons but one God, be
given all Glory now and ever. *Amen.*



SERMON

1871
The first of the year
was a very dry one
and the crops were
very poor. The
winter was also
very dry and the
crops were very
poor. The spring
was also very dry
and the crops were
very poor. The
summer was also
very dry and the
crops were very
poor. The autumn
was also very dry
and the crops were
very poor. The
winter was also
very dry and the
crops were very
poor. The spring
was also very dry
and the crops were
very poor. The
summer was also
very dry and the
crops were very
poor. The autumn
was also very dry
and the crops were
very poor. The
winter was also
very dry and the
crops were very
poor.

D



S E R M O N IV.

On the Holy Ghost.

JOHN xiv. 16, 17.

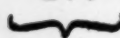
*He shall give you another Comforter, that
he may abide with you for ever; even
the Spirit of Truth.*



ESUS Christ is gently prepar-
ing his Disciples to support his
Departure, which was now near
approaching, with Patience. He
was going from them he acknowledged,
but it was to his Father, to prepare a Place
for them before Hand; after which he
would come again and receive them unto
himself, that where he was, there they
might

SERM.
IV.

SERM. might be also. This was one Ground of

IV.  Consolation that he offer'd to them. Another was, that tho' he was to be personally absent from them for a little Time, yet they should want nothing that was necessary for them; for whatsoever they should ask in his Name, he would procure it for them from his Father. And in the last Place, which was the greatest of all, that he would send them in the mean Time, during his necessary Absence, "another Comforter that should abide with them for ever, even the Spirit of Truth." And the Presence of this Comforter was of that Consequence to them, that he tells them in another Place, it was expedient for them, it was for their Interest that he should go from them; for if he went not away, the Comforter would not come to them: By this signifying that his own Continuance with them would not counter-balance the Loss they would suffer by the Absence of this Comforter.

Now since this gracious Promise of our Blessed Saviour was accomplished as on
this

this Day in the Descent of the Holy Ghost SERM.
upon the Apostles, I shall take Occasion IV.
from the Words of the Text which I have
chosen, in the

1st Place to consider what the Holy Scriptures have revealed to us concerning the Person, the Character and Offices of this Comforter the Spirit of Truth.

2^{dly}, To give some Reason why the Scripture represents it as necessary that Jesus Christ should first go away into Heaven, before the Comforter came.

And *Lastly*, To shew that this Comforter was to continue for ever with the Church during the Absence of Jesus Christ, till his second coming to Judgment.

We are to inquire then in the first Place, what the Holy Scriptures have revealed to us concerning the Person, Character and Offices of this Comforter the Spirit of Truth. The original Word Παράκλησις which we translate by Comforter, is well known to have a much wider Signification. Some seem to have thought that it was incapable of Translation, and therefore have chosen to continue the Original thro'

SERM. thro' the several Languages in which those

IV. Matters have been treated; and accordingly have called the Holy Ghost the *Paraclete*. It is certain that the Word frequently signifies the same with Advocate, and in that Sense the Generality of Divines have chosen to understand it. But perhaps it would better answer the full meaning of the Word, as well as approach something nearer to the Sense of our Translators, if we render'd it by Auxiliary; that auxiliary Spirit of God which helps our Infirmities, which assists and supports the human Mind in its Searches after Truth, in its Efforts towards Sanctification, in its Faith, its Repentance, its Prayers, in a Word every Part of the Christian Duty. The full Reason for this we shall see more perfectly hereafter.

In the mean Time we may observe here, that he is in different Places called the Holy Ghost or Holy Spirit, the Spirit of Holiness, the Spirit of God, the Spirit of Christ, the eternal Spirit, the Spirit of Truth, of Grace, of Glory, of Power, of Love,

On the Holy Ghost.

95

Love, in short of all the Christian Virtues and Powers. SERM.
IV.

But the Name of all these under which he most frequently passes in Scripture, is that of the Holy Ghost or Spirit, which means much the same with the Spirit of God. Holy, as I have had Occasion lately to shew, signifies in the sacred Languages the same with Divine or belonging to God. A Holy People is the People of God; a Holy Day or a Holy Place are a Day and a Place appropriated to God. And thus the Holy Spirit is the same with the Divine Spirit or the Spirit of God. And that not only because he is sent and given by God; for thus every Angel or ministring Spirit may be the Spirit of God; but in a Sense more sublime and peculiar to this Divine Being: He is the Spirit of God in a Sense as intimate as the Mind is the Spirit of Man. This is plain from the Comparison which the Apostle makes between them 1 Cor. xi. "The Spirit
"Searches all Things, yea the deep Things
"of God: For what Man knoweth the
"Things of a Man, save the Spirit of
"Man

SERM. "Man which is in him? Even so the

IV. "Things of God knoweth none but the
 "Spirit of God." This makes it evident
 beyond Dispute, that the Apostle by the
 Spirit of God understood, a Spirit which
 by its close and intimate Union with God
 was privy to his most hidden and abstruse
 Counsels, in the same Manner as the
 human Spirit is conscious to all the
 Thoughts of Man. This is further plain
 in that it is the same Thing in Scripture
 Language to say, that the ancient Prophets
 were inspired of God, or by the Spirit of
 God; the Lord spoke by them, or the
 Holy Ghost spoke by them.

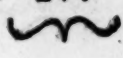
And this is so true, that if the Force
 of some Expressions did not oblige us to
 assign a distinct personality to the Spirit,
 we should be tempted strongly to suppose
 that the Spirit of God, by a Periphrasis
 (a Figure of Language very common es-
 pecially to the *Hebrew* People) meant no
 other than God himself considered as act-
 ing upon human Minds, the Minds of the
 ancient Prophets, and of all Christian Peo-
 ple under the new Dispensation. This

at

at least, I think, is plain to every one that reads the Scripture impartially, that there is much more Ground to suppose God and the Spirit of God to be the same, than to believe the Spirit of God to be of a different Nature, an inferior and subordinate Minister under the supreme God. There are many Passages indeed, as I hinted before, which will not admit of this Supposition neither; as, "the Spirit of Truth which proceedeth from the Father: He shall not speak of himself, but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak: He shall receive of mine; all Things that the Father hath are mine, therefore said I, that he shall take of mine: The Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost: He that searcheth the Hearts knoweth what is the Mind of the Spirit." These Expressions I say, and several others, talk of the Spirit as a distinct Person; the last particularly distinguishes between the Searcher of Hearts and the Spirit, saying that one knew the Mind of the other. Now as these have force enough to make us believe the Spirit of God to be a Person distinct from the Father, so the other

SERM. Considerations hinted before are more
 IV. than enough to prove him to be God,
 and consequently the third Person in that
 adorable Trinity which is the Object of
 the Christian Worship.

Whence he has acquired the peculiar
 Title of the Holy Spirit, in Contradistinction
 to the other two Persons who are like-
 wise Spirits, will be plain, if we add to
 what was observed before concerning the
 Holy Spirit that it is equivalent to the
 Spirit of God, this further Remark: That
 the Office of this Divine Being is every
 where described as conversant with hu-
 man Minds, assisting them with his In-
 spirations, invigorating and empowering
 them with his Influences, enabling them
 to think and exert themselves with more
 Activity and Energy both in the Know-
 ledge of Truth, in the Efforts of Power,
 in the Practice of all Christian Virtues, than
 belongs to the Spirit of Man or a Mind
 purely human. Hence it became neces-
 sary to distinguish in a Prophet, in an
 Apostle, in a Christian, between the pure
 human Capacity, and this additional and
 auxiliary Power received from God: And

as the Former was attributed to the Spirit **SERMA.**
of Man, so This by way of Contradistinc- **IV.**
tion to another Spirit, the Spirit of God. 

Thus, I think, we see pretty clearly in what Sense the Holy Ghost is the Spirit of God, and from whence that Title is appropriated to Him.

But it seems to be in a meaning very different, that he is call'd the Spirit of Christ. We know very well that Jesus Christ was said to be full of the Holy Ghost; that God anointed Jesus of *Nazareth* with the Holy Ghost; that he gave unto him the Spirit without Measure. And accordingly whatever he did, he is said to do by the Holy Ghost; he was conceived of the Holy Ghost; he was conducted by the Spirit; he cast out Devils, and did his other Miracles by the Spirit of God; he gave Commandments to his Disciples thro' the Holy Ghost; he offer'd himself upon the Cross thro' the eternal Spirit; and was quickened by the Spirit. This may seem sufficient Foundation for the Title which the Scripture gives him of the Spirit of Christ. But if we stop here, we shall

SERM. come far short of what seems to be the

IV. Scripture-Notion of that Expression: For
 there is little said of Jesus Christ in this respect, which is not applicable to the Patriarchs, Prophets, and Apostles, and in some Degree to all Christians. They are said to be born of the Spirit, to be baptized with the Holy Ghost, to be fill'd with the Holy Ghost, to be conducted by him, to speak by him, to do Miracles, to speak divers Tongues, to prophecy by him, to do all manner of good Actions, to perform the several Virtues and Operations of the Mind by the Spirit of God: And yet he is never called the Spirit of *David* or of *Paul*.

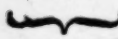
To comprehend this fully, we must take with us the Character which Jesus Christ assumed on Earth, which was that of Man, or Son of Man, the Representative of all Mankind, the great Exemplar of human Nature restor'd to its Integrity; according to which it is familiar to St. *Paul* to consider Jesus Christ as one and the same with the whole Christian Body, and consequently all Christian People

People as so many Parts and Members of SERM.
Him, doing whatever they do, and re- IV.
ceiving whatever they receive, in him. }

Hence we are chosen, adopted, sanctified, crucified, raised from the Dead, and seated in Heaven in Him: Hence the Church is his Body, the Fullness of him that filleth all in all: Hence the "Edifying of the "Body of Christ, till we all come to a perfect Man, to the Measure of the Stature "of the Fullness of Christ," *i. e.* till the Christian Body be compleated by the Union of all its Members received into it, which will then be commensurate to the Fullness of Christ; so that if there be one Christian wanting, there is wanting a Member to the Body of Jesus Christ which renders it imperfect.

The Church therefore, that is, the whole Assemblage or Body of Christian People thus corresponding to Christ, the Holy Ghost which is the one Spirit and Soul of the Christian Body, must in the same Manner and for the same Reason be the Spirit of Christ: And thus that same Spirit which Jesus Christ possessed

SERM. in Fullness and without Measure, is dis-

IV.  perfed abroad among the feveral Mem-
bers of his Body the Church, according to
the Measure of every Part, in fuch Pro-
portions, that taken all together they are
exactly equivalent and corresponding to
that whole Effufion of the Spirit without
Measure, which refted upon Him.

I need not fpend Time in explaining
the feveral other Titles given to the Holy
Ghost which were mentioned before, the
Spirit of Truth, of Power, of Love, &c.
because it is now manifelt that whatever
Truth, whatever Power, whatever Love
is diffufed over the whole Church in a
Christian Senfe, is the Fruit of this Divine
Spirit which is for ever operating in us.
And from thence it is that the Apofle
wifhes his *Corinthians* "the Communion of
" the Holy Ghost," *i. e.* that they may all
participate of the Influences of that Spirit
which animates the Christian Body, and
thus make true Members of Jefus Chrift.

Thus have we feen in fome Measure,
what the Holy Scriptures have revealed to
us concerning the Perfon, the Character

and

and Offices of this Comforter the Spirit SERM.
of Truth. And from what has been said IV.
in the Explication of that Title given him
of the Spirit of Christ, we shall easily be
enabled to do what we propos'd in the

2d Place, Which was to give some Reason why the Scripture represents it as necessary that Jesus Christ should first go away into Heaven, before the Comforter could come. That it was necessary, we may collect from our Saviour's own Words, *Chap. xvi.* "It is expedient for you that I go away: For if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send him unto you:" And from the Observation of *St. John, Chap. vii.* of his Gospel, that "the Holy Ghost was not yet given, because Jesus was not yet glorified." I say that what has been said before explains this; for since the Holy Ghost was the Spirit of Christ who possessed him and all his Influences in Fullness, the same Spirit whose Influences were afterwards diffused in several Measures and Proportions through the whole Church; it seems probable from the whole

SERM. Economy of our Religion, that while our
IV. blessed Saviour continued upon Earth representing in his Person the whole Christian Church, the Powers and Virtues of the Holy Spirit were confined to his Person, and no further diffused abroad but as he occasionally communicated them in a certain Degree to his Apostles and Disciples for special Services. But afterwards when the great Work of Redemption was completed, and he ascended up on High to enter into his Glory, then he gave abroad and distributed the several Gifts of it to Men. For which Reason, probably after his Resurrection, when the Conduct of the Spirit was no longer necessary to him, St. *John* observes in his *xxth* Chapter, that in a full Assembly of his Disciples, our Saviour made use of these Words, "As my Father hath sent me, even so send I you : And when he had said this, he breathed on them and said unto them, Receive ye the Holy Ghost." As his Work was done on Earth, he seems to make a formal surrender of the Holy Ghost to his Disciples whose Work was yet

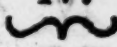
yet to do, and by this Cession to send forth them with the same Powers as the Father had sent him, in which accordingly they were actually invested some few Days after, when the Holy Ghost as at this Time visibly descended upon them. And from this Time it was that they were all "filled with the Holy Ghost," and transform'd into quite other Men; they were led into all Truth, and spoke it with Boldness: For now the Spirit of God no longer acted from without only upon Capacities purely natural, but operated strongly within the Mind itself, and opened it to his heavenly Instructions, and formed it to all those great Purposes for which God had designed them in the Propagation of the Gospel. Nor was this Gift of the Holy Ghost confined to those Persons or those Times, but according to the Expression in the Text he was to abide with them for ever. And this was the

3^d Thing we propos'd to shew, that this Comforter was to continue for ever with the Church during the Absence of Jesus Christ, till his second coming to Judgment.

SERM. Judgment. For we are not to conceive

IV. that these extraordinary and miraculous Powers only, which appeared in the first Ages of the Church, proceeded from the Holy Ghost; for there is no Truth, no Grace or Virtue in a Christian way, but what in the Scripture Account of Things is owing to the kindly Influences of the Spirit.

St. Paul tells us 1 Cor. xii. that "no Man can say that Jesus is the Lord but by the Holy Ghost;" and afterwards in the same Chapter, "There are Diversities of Gifts, but the same Spirit; to One is given by the Spirit the Word of Wisdom, to another the Word of Knowledge by the same Spirit, to another Faith by the same Spirit:" And so he goes on to enumerate many other Kinds of Manifestation which are all wrought by "one and the self same Spirit, dividing to every Man severally as he will; for by one Spirit are we all baptized into one Body." In other Places he tells us, that the "Fruit of the Spirit is Love, Joy, Peace, Gentleness, Goodness, Faith, Meekness, Temperance, all Righteousness" and

“and Truth:” Which is as much as to say, **SERM.**
that there is not the least Truth or Virtue **IV.**
in any Christian whatsoever as a Christian, 
which he does not receive from this Spirit of Truth and Grace. As some are enabled by him for Government and Teaching, so others are enlightened by the same Spirit to receive Instruction and pay Obedience. And the Apostle's Reason for it is this, that by being incorporated into the Christian Body, and becoming Members of it for some Office or other, we are all animated in different Manners and Degrees by one and the same Spirit. Nor is it an Objection to this Doctrine, that the Powers of Nature and the Influences of Grace are so blended within us, that we can not easily unravel them; for no more can we precisely distinguish in other Matters our foreign Acquirements from our original Selves, so closely are they intwisted together in every Thought and Action.

In this Sense we are considered as much the Creature and Workmanship of the Spirit of God, as in our natural State our
several

SERM. several Capacities and Abilities were crea-

IV. ted by God himself. And hence it is
that we are said to be new Men, new
Creatures, regenerated or born again, in
Opposition to the Old Man, *i. e.* our an-
tient Selves, and that first Birth by which
we were born into this World of Nature.
No more than we could Create ourselves
at first, are we now capable of Regene-
rating ourselves. The one is the Work of
God, the other of the Spirit of God. Only
in both Cases it is in us to employ rightly
and make a proper Use of those Powers
which are given us. Those natural En-
dowments which we receive from God,
we may employ aright to their proper
Ends, or we may neglect and pervert
them by Indolence and an ill Use; and
the same we may do with regard to all
those Christian Virtues, the Seeds of which
are infused into us by the Spirit of God,
we may neglect and pervert them, or we
may Cherish them and give them Growth.
And as in a Consideration of Nature God
has given to Men Abilities whereby they
are capable of providing for their natural
Good:

Good: So in a Christian View the Spirit of God has infused into all the Christian World Powers of working out their own Salvation, if they are not stifled and destroyed by Perversity and Disuse. SERM. IV.

I have said all this to shew, that according to the constant Tenour of the Scripture Language, the Holy Spirit is still operating in the Church as much as ever, and that if we are Christians at all, it is by Virtue of his holy Influences which are distributed in some Proportion or other to every true Member of it. And consequently the Difference between those extraordinary and miraculous Powers which were heretofore granted to the first Propagators of Christianity, and the ordinary Virtues of every good Christian, does not lie here, that one were vouchsafed by the Spirit of God, and the other are the pure Fruits of the human Mind; for they are both alike derived from one Spirit: But in this, that the Holy Ghost ever acting uniformly for the Growth of the Christian Body, granted to the Apostles such Powers as were necessary to the first establishing

SERM. blishing it, and to us at this Time such
IV. only as are accommodated to a confirmed
State of Maturity. And I make no Question but if we were able to come at the Proportions of Things in this Kind, we should see those different Powers exactly proportioned to the different States of the Church, and the Holy Spirit not to act irregularly and by Starts, but by the most invariable Rule of a perfect Proportion.

And this Perpetuation of the Holy Spirit thro' the several Ages of Christianity, justifies that antient and venerable Language which our Church makes use of in its several Offices, and particularly That of Ordination. It is so much the Fashion of our modern Talk to deify ourselves, and to ascribe all Glory to our own Perfections and Virtues, that the Language of the Scriptures is become antiquated, and by the extremest Ignorance as well as Profaneness turn'd into Burlesque. When the ordained Person is said to receive the Holy Ghost, and professes to be moved by the Holy Ghost in desiring Orders, this is received by these Men of Reason

On the Holy Ghost.

III

Reason with an Air of Insult. But if a Person in desiring Orders is moved by any Christian Motive at all, if he has any true Intention of performing his Duty in that Station of the Church to which he is called (and without it he must be very unfit to receive them) this, as I have shewn before, all proceeds from the Holy Ghost and none else, and cannot be expressed so properly in any other Words; for as it is the Truth of Things, so it is the very Language of the Holy Spirit himself. And again, In receiving Ordination, What is received? Not any natural Advantages; that is easily allowed with a Sneer; but the Person ordained receives Authority to act as a Priest in the Christian Church: And is not this one Gift of the Holy Ghost? Is there any Authority but what is derived from him? If therefore he receives not the Holy Ghost, he receives nothing at all in a Christian Way, because there is nothing as such but what is derived from him, any more than there can be in a State any Civil Authority which is not

SERM.

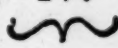
IV.

SERM. not derived from the supreme Power
IV. wherever it resides.

And now in looking back upon this Doctrine in the View in which we have been considering it, we cannot but observe the Perfection of the Christian Dispensation. As it is perfect in the Object of its Worship, in attributing every Thing in its first Ground, the original Creation and Production of all Things to one all-perfect Being the God and Father of all; as it is perfect in ascribing our Redemption to the same God in the Person of the Son; so is it perfect in ascribing the inward Operation upon the human Mind to the same God by his Spirit. It had not been sufficient that the Object without us had been perfect, if the Mind had not been turned and directed towards it by the most perfect Assistance within. And if we had accounted for any of these by any Being less than God, our Account of them must be imperfect; we might still have conceived something beyond it: Whereas now when we say that God himself by his Spirit illuminates, assists and comforts

On the Holy Ghost.

113

comforts us, we say that Man has all the SERM.
Illumination, the Assistance and Comfort IV.
that can be granted him. 

And this further explains to us the great Danger of resisting the Holy Ghost, of grieving and quenching or stifling the Spirit, and perhaps the Reason why the Sin or Blasphemy against the Holy Ghost is unpardonable: Because there is left nothing further that can be done towards reclaiming and saving us. Every Sin against the Father and the Son may be forgiven, for there is still a further Method of Conviction left behind in the internal Influences of the Spirit; but if these don't prevail, if these become a Subject of Contempt and Ridicule, I tremble to pronounce the Consequence! May God Almighty preserve us all from it!

On the contrary, may we all open our Hearts to the Influences of this Divine Spirit: And as he descended on this Day upon the Apostles in visible Fire, so let us pray God that he may descend upon every one of us in this sacred Ordinance to which we are approaching, tho' in a more

I

secret

SERM. secret and invisible Manner, and melt our

IV. Souls into a perfect Compliance with his
most holy Inspirations, for Jesus Christ's
Sake. To whom with Thee, O Father,
and the same Holy Ghost, three Persons
and one God, be given all Glory now and
ever. *Amen.*





S E R M O N V.

On the Original and Obligation
of GOVERNMENT.

ROMANS xiii. 1, 2.

Let every Soul be subject to the Higher Powers; for there is no Power but of God: The Powers that be are ordained of God. Whosoever therefore resisteth the Power, resisteth the Ordinance of God: And they that resist shall receive to themselves Damnation.



HIS is a Subject which the Church clearly enough Points out to us by making it Part of the Epistle for the Day, and by enjoining us, in Case of no Sermon, to read a Homily against Rebellion.

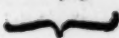
SERM.
V.

SERM. In treating of it I shall carefully observe the Bounds which naturally divide it into two Parts; one of which properly belongs to ~~those~~ those who are learned in the Laws and Constitution of every Country, and will admit great Diversity from the different Kinds of Government: The other more general and of eternal Obligation, which falls under the Consideration of Religion; and which therefore a Minister of the Gospel cannot refuse to treat of, when a proper Occasion calls him to it.

It has been ever matter of much Dispute, and more especially so of later Years, where to place the Foundation of Government, and of the Authority which it claims over the Subject, and how far it extends. Many have been the Schemes advanced by different Authors; but perhaps by closely attending the Sense of our Apostle from the Beginning of this Chapter to the End of the 5th Verse, we may attain better Satisfaction in these Points, than from them all put together.

From

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From the Words of the Text give me SERM.
leave to observe to you *four* Things worth V.
our Notice. 

First, That St. *Paul* defines no particular Form of Government, much less the Persons entrusted with it, but describes it under the general Words of *the Power, the Higher Powers, the Powers that be.*

Secondly, That he affirms the Divine Right of Government, that it is *of God*, is *ordained of God*, and is *the Ordinance of God.*

Thirdly, The Necessity of Obedience to Government, from which no Person is excepted, for *every Soul must be subject* to it. And

Lastly, The Penalty denounced against Disobedience; *They that resist, shall receive to themselves Damnation.*

These four Points are to comprehend the Whole of what I propose to say upon this Subject.

I begin with the *first* Observation, that St. *Paul* throughout this whole Argument

SERM. defines no particular Form of Govern-
 V. ment, much less the Persons entrusted
 with it; but describes it under the general Words of *the Power, the Higher Powers, and the Powers that be*: Which will suit any Kind of Establishment alike, one as well as another.

When this Epistle was written to the *Romans* some time under *Nero*, the Government there was Monarchical, and had been so for many Years, since the great Change in it begun by *Julius* and completed by *Augustus Cæsar*. This Government, however violent and unjust in its first Establishment, was now become by Time and long Acquiescence the settled Government, to which *St. Paul* must be supposed to enjoin Obedience: For there was no other then in Being. But if Christianity had been introduced into the World a Century or two before, when the *Roman* Constitution was different, and the Government was Popular, no reasonable Man I believe will doubt but the Apostle would have laid the same Injunction upon the Christians of that Time to be obedient

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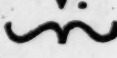
to the Higher Powers; the Words being no SERM.
more adapted to a Monarchy than a De- V.
mocracy, and expressing only the then su-
preme Authority wherever it was lodged. ~~~~~
And whether the Monarchy was a limited
one, as the *Roman* was in some Measure
tempered by the Authority of the Senate, or
absolute, such as was the *Parthian* at that
Time; it is very probable that the great
Apostle of the *Gentiles* would have made
no Distinction in the general Precept of
Obedience to all Christians living under
either of these different Kinds of Monar-
chy, but have said to both what he says
now to one, *Let every Soul be subject to
the Higher Powers*, without determining
what those Powers were, and where they
were lodged: For this is a Question which
does not properly fall under the Deter-
mination of Religion, nor can be answer-
ed by any Words explicit enough to suit
the various Circumstances of Mankind
under every Form of Government, which
is not perfectly the same in any two Na-
tions or Ages.

SERM. Nothing therefore could be done further than to comprize the Duty of Subjects in Terms so general as to extend to all Times and Places, and leave the particular Application of them to the Persons concerned in applying them. Thus these Words of the Apostle make it an everlasting Duty to *be subject to the Higher Powers*; are as obliging here in this Island as under the *Roman Empire*; now as Seventeen Hundred Years ago; wherever there are Powers established and Persons to obey them.

Nor is this Rule of the Apostle, general as it is, more exposed to Dispute and Uncertainty than any other whatsoever. We all know where the supreme Authority is lodged: The meanest Understanding is naturally led into this Knowledge. I speak in general, and of the common Cases that happen in the World. There are indeed some extraordinary Conjunctions, in which it requires a very critical Knowledge in the Constitution of our Country to determine who are vested in the supreme Authority and with what Portions of it, to under-

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understand and define the Bounds of Power **SERM.**
which any Member of the Government **V.**
may Claim : There are beyond these again 
sometimes Intricacies where no Knowledge
can perfectly disentangle us, in Times of
Turbulence and Distraction, where the
Government is violently torn asunder, and
Justice and Protection have left their
wonted Channel. To such Times we may
apply the Words of the Royal Prophet
Psalms xi. If the Foundations be destroyed,
what can the Righteous do ? How can a
Man ever so honest and well intentioned
tell where to rest his Foot, when the
Foundations of all Government are them-
selves overthrown ? Here therefore the
Rule of being subject to the Higher Powers
would not sufficiently direct us, the Dis-
pute being concerning the Powers them-
selves : It being impossible to be subject
before we are agreed upon the Point to-
wards which Subjection is due. All that
can be done by an honest Man in such
Case, is to use his own best Judgment, to
take the best Advice, and to pray God for
his Direction.

But

SERM. But in the mean Time, after all this is

V. acknowledged and allowed for, it is no more an Objection to the Sufficiency of this Rule than of any other whatsoever; it being not in the Power of Words to define any thing so exactly but there may arise Cases of Difficulty, where we cannot certainly pronounce whether they are within the Rule or not. Our Comfort lies here, that these difficult Times are interspersed but rarely; are contrary to the established Order of Things; and that where once our Duty is uncertain, it is a Hundred Times as clear as the Sun.

We at this Time especially, cannot complain of this Apostolical Rule for want of sufficient Evidence. For tho' there may be found in our History some critical Points of Time when it was not easy for an honest Man to tell how to act; and in every Revolution that happens at some Stage or other of it, either in the Preparations towards it, or the Execution of it, or the unsettled State after it, some such Moment is to be found when the Reasons of either Side are nearly ballanced,

ced, and we cannot positively affirm when **SERM.**
precisely the Administration may begin to **V.**
deserve the Name of *the Higher Powers*,
the *Powers that be*: However there may
have been such, I say; at present there
can be no Dispute, when we see a Go-
vernment peaceably established by a long
Series of Years, in which without any In-
terruption there has been a mutual Inter-
course of Protection and Allegiance.

But there are two Things which espe-
cially recommend this Apostolical Rule of
the Powers that are: One, that it is a
much surer Rule to walk by than those
which have been advanced by our mo-
dern Writers; the Other, that it is that
Rule by which in Fact the World has
governed itself in all Ages.

I say, with all that Uncertainty which we
have granted before, it is still a much surer
Rule than that which others have advanced.
For how many just Scruples might not
we raise, if to justify our Obedience to the
Government now in Being, we were obli-
ged on one Side to have recourse to an
uninterrupted Succession of Right down
from

SERM. from *Adam* or *Noah* to this Time ; or on

V. the other to an original Compact made
 long ago, we know not when, between
 the Subject and the Sovereign ? For, not
 to mention the infinite Uncertainties of
 either Scheme as to their Foundation, the
 many Breaches in the Claim which ought
 to be preserved intire, the many Altera-
 tions in the Government since that Com-
 pact, if there were any such ; if it could
 be supposed that by a laborious Collection
 of Records of past Times we might arrive
 at some obscure Notices of what we pre-
 tend to advance ; yet after all our Search,
 there must of Necessity still remain be-
 hind so much Uncertainty as would leave
 a very weak Support to so important a
 Duty, and the far greater Part of Man-
 kind would be utterly incapable of ma-
 king it out.

And accordingly, as we observed be-
 fore, the World without taking the Pains
 to look out for Reasons so far fetched,
 have ever obeyed the Powers in Being, and
 for that Reason, because they have been
 the Powers in Being. And this is so ge-
 nerally true, that not One in Ten thou-
 sand

land can be excepted from it. Now this SERM.
with any thinking Man must give a vast V.
Prepossession in favour of this Rule, and
incline him to think that there must be
Reason sufficient to justify a Practice which
the Providence of God has rendered so
universal and almost unavoidable. The
only Difficulty will be upon this Bottom,
to make out the Divine Right of Govern-
ment; for this the Apostle expressly affirms,
and was the

Second Observation we made from the
Words of the Text. He says directly
that it is *of God*, is *ordained of God*, and
is *the Ordinance of God*.

These Words, if any in the World can,
affirm the Divine Right of Government.
And pursuant to this in the Verses follow-
ing he says, That where the Ruler does
Good to those that deserve it by their
good Behaviour, he is *the Minister of God
for Good*; and where he punishes those
that do Evil, he is *the Minister of God
to execute Wrath*: i. e. in all he does, whe-
ther he punishes or rewards, he is *the
Minister of God*: For which Reason, as
he

SERM. he subjoins in the 5th Verse, *Ye must needs*

V. *be subject, not only for Wrath but Conscience sake*: The Stress of which Argument lies here; they were to obey for Conscience sake, not because he did Good or executed Wrath where the several Behaviour of the Subject required it; for this could only oblige them in Prudence, not in Conscience, to merit his Favour and avoid his Wrath: But because he was the *Minister of God* in both these Instances of Power. For the Conscience is subject to God only, and there is no reaching the Conscience but in bringing a Duty down some how or other from God.

The Subjection therefore which we owe to Government must be deduced from God, or we can never prove it binding upon the Conscience. Now when we consider closely, there is no Right but a Divine Right, and if Government has not that, it has none at all. But then there is a Difference in the Declaration and Evidence of this Divine Right, by which it is made known to us. It may come to us in the Way of Reason, and from those natural Notions

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tions of God which That is able to sug- SERM.
gest to us; or it may be discovered to us V.
by Revelation and those extraordinary Me-
thods of his Providence by which he some-
times chuses to manifest his Will. Now
when St. *Paul* speaks without Exception of
all Power, that it is *of God*, he cannot be
supposed to mean that all civil Govern-
ment was instituted in a miraculous and
extraordinary Way, by a Voice from Hea-
ven, or any other stupendous Manifesta-
tion of the Divine Pleasure. This at least
is certain, that the *Roman* Government
that then was, could have no Pretensions
of that Kind: So far from it, that in its
Foundation it had not the common Forms
of Right which human Ordinances might
give it; for it owed its Establishment to
the Sword.

It remains then to be made out in a
Way of Reason, that it proceeds from God,
and therefore justly and in Conscience
claims a Right to our Obedience. And
this will be easily done by having recourse
to that original Notion of Authority as it
is vested in God. For if we apply that to
human

SERM. human Governments, we shall see at once

V. whether it belongs to them, and in what Measures and Proportions it is derived to them from God.

Now some account for the Sovereignty of God over us from our being his Property, his Creation, the Work of his Hands. This Notion seems to be taken from those Methods of ascertaining Property amongst Men, according to which, he that makes any Thing is allowed to have the Property in it, and to make his Advantage of it. And indeed in this View, considered as we are passive, Things to be used and possessed, the Use and Possession of us must belong to him. But where he has created free Beings, vested with Powers of Thought and Action, and Capacities for Happiness and Desires after it, such as we enjoy, it is impossible that he can govern us but in a way suited to those Powers and Capacities. For instance, had he commanded us to be unhappy, or to do things which would end in our absolute Misery, notwithstanding any Right of Creation, that Desire of Happiness which he himself

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self had implanted in us, would make our Obedience impossible. Should he enjoyn us to love him at the same Time that he wanted Goodness, which is the proper Object of Love; or to fear him if he wanted Power, which only can influence that Passion; it were not possible that those Faculties could be subject to him, because it would be in direct Opposition to those Natures which he himself had given them. If he has given us Reason whereby we are able to see Fitness and Unfitness, Right and Wrong, and he should give us Commandments which upon the Whole were not right and fit, would it not be a Contradiction to say, that it was right and fit to obey him?

Without Recourse therefore to past Times, we know in a way much more simple, by the direct Relation which is now this Moment subsisting between God and us, that he possesses all Right of Sovereignty over us: For he possesses every Thing in Perfection that can possibly answer to every Power and Desire of the Soul; and were he supposed to want any

K

one

SERM.

V.

SERM. one of these Perfections, he would want
 V. one Foundation of Sovereignty, he would
 not be the perfect Sovereign that he
 now is.

And from hence we may learn to judge of those Schemes which resolve all into Power, or any other one Attribute of the Divine Nature. God is possessed of infinite Power its true, and can enforce Obedience; but if that were all, we could not love him; that were an Argument to our Fear only, to which and nothing else on that Supposition he would have a perfect Right. Again, Suppose God to be all Goodness, and he would merit all our Love: But so we could not fear him; that Part of us would want its natural Restraint. Suppose both These in God, but without Justice and Rectitude; and we should obey him because we must do it, or because we chose to do it, but not because it was right and fit to do it: Under that Consideration we can obey him no otherwise but as what he Commands is right and fit, that is, under the Attributes of Justice and Rectitude. We see
 then

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then that the Foundation of the Divine **SERM.**
Sovereignty rests here, that God Almighty **V.**
directly and without any Retrospection
possesses every Thing most perfectly that
must or ought to influence our Obedi-
ence. He is most powerful, most good,
most wise, most just. Now let us apply
this same Reasoning to earthly Sovereign-
ties.

Man is made for Society: This cannot
subsist but by a regular Order and Go-
vernment: There must be Governors and
there must be Subjects: Governors must
command and Subjects must obey: With-
out this there is no attaining the good
Ends of Society: So much we take for
granted. Well then, as I am made for
Society, Providence has placed me in one,
where there is an established Order and
Government: I am a Subject. Must I
then, in order to know whether I am
obliged to pay Obedience, search back
into the Records of a Thousand Years to
find a Ground for my Duty? Does not
there subsist a direct and immediate Re-
lation, which justifies and requires my

SERM. Obedience? Is there not, by the Supposition, annexed to Government in its general Nature a Power, a Goodness, a Wisdom, a Justice, which makes it necessary and beneficial, and right and fit to be subject to the Authority under which I find my self born? Don't Protection and Obedience answer one to the other? And does not God then the Author of all this Fitness require this Subjection?

As in the Case of the Divine Sovereignty, we find ourselves born under the Government of that All-perfect Being who is every way qualified to command us, and exercise an actual Dominion over us, and nothing further is required to prove that we owe him all Subjection: So here there is none of us who is born loose and independent, and indifferent to this or that Society of Men, but we come into the World actually under some one Government, which therefore immediately, and without any farther Reasoning, justly claims our Homage and Submission. Nor can we deny it in its proper Measure to human Sovereignities, any more than we
can

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can refuse it absolutely and without Re- SERM.
serve to God himself: For the same Per- V.
fections which he possesses infinitely, they
possess to a certain Degree as derived from
him, and consequently the Authority that
results from them. Thus is the Right of
Government a Divine Right, as being
founded upon the same Reason with that
of God himself, tho' in an imperfect and
restrained Manner, and as being a Ray
and Communication from him; as truly
a Divine Right as if it were declared so
by a Voice from Heaven.

And it was more especially necessary
for the *Apostle*, at that time, to represent
the Obligation to Obedience as an *Ordi-
nance of God*, and incumbent upon the
Conscience, for this Reason, because he
wrote to *Christians* lately converted by the
miraculous Evidence of a Divine Com-
mission. What Commands they received
from the Apostles, they truly considered
as proceeding from God. These they
very religiously observed and practised. On
the other hand, considering Government
as a human Institution, and the Laws of

SERM. Governors but as the Laws of Men, they
 V. might very naturally be disposed to think
 slightly of One and the Other, as Things
 of a Nature and Obligation much inferior.
 For where the Dispute lies between God
 and Man, between the Convenience of
 submitting to Men and the Obligation in
 Conscience to obey God, Where is the
 Comparifon?

St. *Paul* therefore may be fupposed to
 fpeak to his *Romans* with an Intention
 fomewhat like this. “ You may perhaps
 “ wrongly imagine, that by the extraor-
 “ dinary Revelation of the Will of God,
 “ which he has vouchsafed to make to
 “ you thro’ our Miniftry, you are dif-
 “ charged from the ordinary Obedience
 “ which is due from Subjects to their So-
 “ vereign. But this is a Miftake: For
 “ Government is the Ordinance of God,
 “ and the Powers that be are ordained
 “ of God, and therefore every Soul muft
 “ be fubject to them, as well you that
 “ are converted to the Faith of Chrift,
 “ as thofe that remain in Gentilifm. For
 “ their Laws are the Laws of God within
 their

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“ their proper Sphere, and they the Mini- SERM.
“ sters of God as well as we. Upon this V.
“ Bottom we are capable of comparing
“ Duty with Duty, putting Conscience
“ against Conscience, and making a slight
“ Scruple on one Side submit to a great
“ Reason on the other.”

Vain therefore are those Pretensions of the Bishop of *Rome* to a Power of absolving Subjects from their Allegiance to their Sovereigns; much less still has he a Power of Authorizing them to murder and destroy them; even if we were to allow him to inherit all the Power which the Apostles themselves had. For it appears evidently from *St. Paul*, that they had no such; Apostles and Sovereigns being both Ministers of God alike to their respective Purposes. And miserably deluded were those poor Wretches, who as on this Day from no better Reason had contrived to perpetrate a Barbarity the most horrid and shocking to human Nature that ever entered into the Heart of Man, no less than the Destruction of the whole Majesty and

SERM. Authority of a great Kingdom at one
V. blow. And this leads to the

Third Observation we made, the Necessity of Obedience to Government, from which no Person is excepted, for *every Soul* must *be subject* to it.

And the Reason of this is plain: For if Government be the *Ordinance of God*, and Governors are appointed by Him, then it follows directly that to obey them is to obey God, and to disobey them is to disobey God, under whose Commission they act: And no Subject of any Rank, Order, or Denomination, can any more plead an Exemption from this Duty, than from the Duty which he owes to God: For they are in this Case the same and coincident with one another.

But then this Doctrine, as has been hinted before, does not at all determine where the supreme Power is lodged, whether in one or many. That is supposed here to be a Point well known to every Subject. And therefore we are only required

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quired in general to pay Obedience to *SERM.*
the *Higher Powers* wherever they be. *V.*

Nor is this Doctrine to be strained to justify and screen downright Tyranny and Oppression. We must remember what has been already said concerning the Nature of Authority, that God only can claim a Sovereignty truly Absolute, because He only possesses in Fulness all those Perfections upon which it is grounded: To Men they are given with some Limitation, and accordingly their Authority must be in Proportion limited. The Government of God is ever just, wise and good, and that gives him a Right to an everlasting Obedience without Exception. Human Governors are in general the *Ministers of God for Good*, and that is sufficient to ground a general Rule for Obedience; a Rule as general as is the Foundation upon which it is built; as general as any other Rule or Law that can be given to Men, which cannot be so contrived as to suit all the extraordinary Cases that may happen.

The

SERM. The Government which we are born
V. under is a limited Monarchy : For Mon-
archy is generally distinguished into Ab-
solute and Limited. The Difference be-
tween which does not seem to lie here,
that the absolute Monarch is wholly with-
out Restraint, and has full Authority to
do Right or Wrong, to protect or murder
his Subjects as he pleases, whereas the
Latter is confined by the Laws to do
Justice. No, they are both obliged alike
to do Justice, and to promote the Good
of their respective Societies : For this is
universally known to be the End of Go-
vernment. But in one Case this is left
to the natural Equity of the Monarch,
without any written Laws or appointed
Persons to controll him : In the other
there are settled Rules and well-known
Bounds, within which the Prince is to
exercise his Sovereignty for the same End ;
for the Ends of both are the same, but
the Method by which they would attain
them is different. Accordingly in one
Case the Subject is directed by those same
Laws where to obey and where to refuse
Obedience :

Obedience: In the other he is left at loose SERM.
to his natural Duty, to obey in general, V.
and to disobey only where the Nature and ~
Ends of Government make it necessary.

And pursuant to this has been the universal Practice of the World where the Government is most absolute, as in *Turky* or *Moscovy*, there have been as frequent Instances of withdrawing their Obedience from their Princes as in other Countries where it is limited. Only there they have no Rule to go by, no Law to direct them, but the natural Notions of Tyranny and Oppression, according to which they feel when the Government is totally perverted from its right Purpose. With us, over and above those natural Notions, we have the Assistance of established Laws to direct us in our Judgment, where the Prince transgresses the Bounds of his Authority, and begins to abuse his Power.

And yet even here it is impossible to define exactly when he has forfeited the Allegiance of his Subjects: For they are not some few Transgressions or some slight Abuses which can justify us in withdrawing

SERM. ing it. Nothing less than a general De-

V. pravation of the Government and Con-
 {tempt of the Laws and Destruction of
 Right and Property Civil and Religious
 can absolve us. Such as was the Con-
 dition of this Island when the late King
William III. of glorious Memory came to
 rescue us, for which we are now met
 together to return our solemn Thanks to
 Almighty God.

The Nature of human Things which
 will admit of nothing truly absolute, obli-
 ges us to make Allowance for extraordi-
 nary Cases which go beyond all Rule. But
 on the other Hand we ought not from
 hence to be perpetually insisting upon
 those Hurricanes and Turbulencies of hu-
 man Governments. God be praised that
 in the ordinary Course of his Providence
 he has made them seldom necessary : For
 they are very terrible when they come.
 The general Rule is Obedience ; when we
 are gone beyond That, we know not
 where we are : 'Tis all Distraction and
 Confusion. Within That therefore we
 ought in Imitation of the *Apostle* to con-
 fine

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fine ourselves, and leave the Exceptions SERM.
to the Necessity of Things, which will call V.
them out when they become necessary. }
There was a

Fourth Thing observed, which was the Penalty denounced against Disobedience. *They that resist shall receive to themselves Damnation.* Some have explained the original Word *Κριμα*, which is here rendered Damnation, by temporal Punishment and Condemnation; they shall be punished and condemned for it by the Magistrate: Probably thinking Damnation to be too terrible a Thing to be inflicted upon Men for a Crime which appeared to Them not so heinous: Not considering that as there is no greater Crime against a State than Rebellion, so there must of Course be no greater Sin against God; the same that makes one makes the other. If we reflect upon the Murders, Rapines, Devastations, Confusions of Property which attend it, there cannot possibly be a Sin of a deeper Die. And therefore it can be no Wonder that the Apostle expressly affirms

SERM. firms that *they that resist shall receive to*

V. *themselves Damnation* : He can mean nothing else : For consider his Reasoning.

“ Let every Soul be subject to the Higher
 “ Powers : For the Powers are ordained
 “ of God : Whosoever therefore resisteth
 “ the Power, resisteth the Ordinance of
 “ God : They therefore that resist shall
 “ be punished by the Civil Magistrate.”
 What strange Kind of Consequence is this ?
 His Business was to prove that Magistracy
 being the Ordinance of God, they that
 resisted That, resisted God, and consequently
 should be punished by God with the Punishment
 that properly belongs to God, the everlasting Punishment in another
 World, for the Christian Religion knows no other.

They would do well to consider this, who are apt to talk and think slightly of the Obligations of Government. Their Brains are so full of the Exception, that they hardly leave any Room for the Rule itself. But however large a Space it may fill in their Imagination, it bears but a very small Proportion to it in Nature and
 the

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the Truth of Things. Once in some SERM.
Centuries it may be right, but at all other V.
Times it is Wrong, and generally the
greatest of all Wrongs. For whatever
Force the Word Right has in human
Things, all that Right in its strongest
Meaning the Sovereign has to the Obedi-
ence of the Subject: And whatever Sin
there is in acting contrary to any Right,
all that there is in Rebellion, and conse-
quently all the Punishment Divine as well
as Human that belongs to it.

*God Almighty preserve us all from it
for Jesus Christ's Sake, to whom with the
Father and the Holy Ghost be given all
Glory now and ever. Amen.*



SER-

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S E R M O N VI.

On the Love of God.

MATTHEW xxii. 37, 38.

*Jefus faid unto him, Thou fhalt love the
Lord thy God with all thy Heart, and
with all thy Soul, and with all thy Mind.
This is the firft and great Commandment.*



THE Love of God, by the Im-
prudence of fome good Men
who have carried it into Rap-
ture and Extravagance, has suf-
fered a great deal with thofe who love
calm and fober Thinking. As they have
L treated

SERM.
VI.

SERM. treated it in such a Manner as to make it
 VI. almost wholly impracticable for any but
 a few contemplative Men, so the World
 seems to have left it to them as something
 very good indeed, but too perfect and
 sublime for general Use. And from hence
 it has proceeded, as one Extreme naturally
 creates another to ballance it, that some
 have depreciated it in comparison to that
 which our *Saviour* calls the Second Com-
 mandment, the *Love of our Neighbour*,
 and left it little more than a Name, a bare
 Complement to God-Almighty, with very
 little Substance and Reality.

But however slightly we may think of
 it, we are assured in my *Text* from the
 best Authority in the World, that it is *the*
first and great Commandment: And we do
 not find that the Enemies of our *Lord*,
 who lay in wait for something to find
 fault with, and by ensnaring Questions
 endeavoured to draw Answers from his
 Mouth which they might afterwards make
 their Advantage of, found any thing in
 this to object against. On the contrary
St. Mark informs us in his *xiith Chapter*,
 that

that the very Scribe who asked him the SERM.
Question which was the great Command- VI.
ment of the Law, with a tempting and
insidious Design, highly approved this
Answer of our *Saviour*, and that *no Man*
after that durst ask him any Question.

It must be therefore of great Consequence to understand rightly this great Duty of the *Love of God*, and to have it explained to us in such a Manner that it may appear in the highest Degree both reasonable and practicable. And to this end I shall

First, Shew the Reason upon which this Precept is founded: from whence it becomes our Duty to *love the Lord our God with all our Heart, and with all our Soul, and with all our Mind.*

Secondly, Shew that this does by no means clash with those natural Affections and Duties which we owe to Men, but on the contrary, that this Love of God is the only solid Foundation of all Duty whatsoever. And therefore

SERM. *In the last Place, That it is the first and*
 VI. *great Commandment, the most essential and*
 indispensable of all others.

First then we are to shew the Reason upon which this Precept is founded; from whence it becomes our Duty to *love the Lord our God with all our Heart, and with all our Soul, and with all our Mind.* And here it may be proper to observe beforehand, that this is no otherwise true of Love than of Fear, Honour, every Kind of Respect and Veneration, which must in the same Manner, and for the same Reason be given to God with the whole Heart and Soul: And so it is expressed in other Parts of Scripture, as *Deut. x. And now Israel, what doth the Lord thy God require of thee, but to fear the Lord thy God, and to walk in his Ways, and to love him, and to serve the Lord thy God with all thy Heart, and with all thy Soul?* where we see that the whole Homage and Service of the Soul must be paid to the Deity.

And the Reason of this will appear by considering the Introduction with which
 this

this Commandment is ushered in, in the SERM.
Place of *Deuteronomy* from whence our VI.
Saviour takes these Words: *Hear, O Israel,*

the Lord our God is one Lord; and then immediately follow the Words of the *Text*, *Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy Heart, &c.* And the Consequence is very just. For if there is but one God, there is but one Fountain of all Perfection, but one Being in whom is centered every thing that is lovely, that is, every thing that can possibly answer to the whole Extent of our Love. For as the Prophet in the *xctb Psalm* speaks with regard to the Wrath of God, that it is exactly proportioned to the Sum of Fear which we have to bestow upon him; *as is thy Fear, says he, so is thy Wrath*: So in this Case as is our Love, the whole Power and Faculty of Love within us, just so is the Divine Amiability, perfectly corresponding and proportioned to it.

Were we to suppose according to the Heathen Scheme many Gods, every one independent upon the other, though we might conceive a Sort of Perfection shared

SERM. between them, yet no one singly could
VI. with Justice challenge the whole Heart,
but the Affection ought to be parcelled
out between them according to their several Proportions. And hence it is that God is so jealous of a Rival, that he will not share his Glory with another : For he cannot possibly give up the Demand which he has upon the whole Soul but by denying his own Unity, and severing the Perfection of his Being. And for this Reason undoubtedly it is, that the *Scripture* so frequently represents the Bond subsisting between God and his People, by that sacred Covenant of Marriage. For as the Wife owes and engages the whole Fidelity of her Heart to her Husband, so they who have *chosen the Lord to be their God*, they who have once enlisted themselves into the Faith of one God, into whose supreme Excellence all Things in Heaven and Earth are resolved, must by that very Action devote to him their whole Heart and Soul and Mind : And every Breach of this Duty is that Adultery of the Soul, which the Prophets have described in the strongest
and

On the Love of God.

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and most terrible Expressions that Inspi- SERM.
ration could suggest. VI.

The first meaning therefore of this Precept of *Loving the Lord our God with all our Heart*, as it stands in the Law of *Moses*, was plainly intended against Idolatry: If they worshiped other Gods, they too must have a Share in the Heart, and justly too; for to acknowledge many Gods, was to acknowledge so many Sources of Homage and Love. In such a State to confine the whole Heart to One, would be as unfit and disproportioned, as on the contrary it would be to keep back any Part of it from one Being which comprehended all Perfection. And thus we see very plainly the Connexion between those two Sentences, *Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God is one Lord*, and *Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy Heart*: For which Reason those good Kings who adhered firmly to the Worship of this one God, without any Mixture of Idolatry, were said to *serve him with a perfect Heart*, that is, a Heart whole and undivided.

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And

SERM.

VI.

And thus far it may seem a Doctrine of very little Concern to us at this Time. We are now in no Danger of dividing our Allegiance between God and Idols. We all profess to worship *one God and Father of all*, and we see no Disposition anywhere to revive that Idolatry to which the antient World, and even the *Jews* themselves, appeared to have once so strong an Inclination. This Dispute has been long since decided to the universal Satisfaction of us all: *The Lord our God is one Lord*. But do we therefore *love him with all our Heart, and all our Soul, and all our Mind*? I am afraid not. Yet surely we ought to do so; for not to give him all our Love, is to deny to him something that is amiable, it is to say that he wants some Perfection, that he is not God: And however we may Complement him with Words, this is really the Language of that Heart where he does not reign Supreme in the Affection; and God who understands that Language, which alone speaks the Truth of Things, will judge of us accordingly.

Nay

Nay more, since the Question is not **SERM.**
about creating a new Power within us, **VI.**
or destroying an Old one, whether we
should have more or less Love in our
Composition than God hath put into it;
but how we should employ this All that
we have, be it more or less (and surely
there is no Man but has it in some De-
gree or other) it is certain that if God
has is not, something else has; that the
Perfection which we deny to him, we
place in some other Thing: That is, we
divide the Unity of the Deity, and are as
truly guilty of Idolatry as ever the grossest
Heathen was.

For we are not to think that the Fi-
gure or the Matter, the Stone or the Me-
tal constitute the Idol; these are only the
outer Vestments of it: Nor is Idolatry the
Bowing of the Knee, or the Prostration
of the Body; these are only the Signifi-
cations of that internal Homage paid to
something that is not God; when we place
some Part of that Perfection which is the
Prerogative of God in any Creature. Now
this we do whenever we split abroad our
Love

SERM. Love without referring it all supremely to

VI. one Head; for this is really to acknowledge many Independent Principles of Perfection, to worship more Gods than one: And wherever we rest any Part of our Love without that further Reference to one original Cause, that Thing whatever it be, we set up for an Idol against God.

This is the *Christian* Idolatry which we are as much concerned to guard against now as ever; and to us are directed those Commandments of the first Table which regard Idolatry and a Plurality of Gods, as to the true Meaning and Spirit of them, as truly as to the *Jews* themselves. And God only knows, if those inner Recesses of the Soul, those Sanctuaries of the Heart were to be laid open, (as they are all *open and naked to the Eyes of him with whom we have to do*) how many of these Idols we should there discover, what Humiliations and Basenesses of the most abject Servitude we should there see practiced to them! We should discern Abominations of every Kind standing in that most Holy Place, claiming all the Prerogatives of Divinity, and usurping

usurping the same Worship from their Vo-
taries, which the *most High* in Vain has
called for from them. We should see there
Sacrifices of infinitely greater Value than
God ever demanded from them, made to
those false Deities: Men sacrificing their
Health, and Ease, and Honour, and Hap-
piness, and Salvation to a Man or to a
Woman, to Silver or Gold, to a Gain, a
Title, or a Post, to this or that Vanity,
or perhaps Ten thousand at once which
engross their whole Heart, and Soul, and
Strength, and Mind. For engrossed they
must be, as was observed before, by some-
thing or other; and, by a just Judgment
of God, that proud Scornor who refuses the
just Homage which is due to his natural
Lord, shall at the same Time tremble at
the Frowns of a Man like himself; shall
be infinitely fond to Folly and Madness
of some mean and pitiful Object, what-
ever it be that happens to infatuate him.

There is something of this Kind very
strong and masterly in the first Chapter of
St. Paul's Epistle to the *Romans*, where the
Apostle talking of the Corruption of the
Gentile

SERM.

VL

SERM. Gentile World, says, that " They who

VI. " from the Vanity of their Imaginations,

~ " and a false Conceit of their own Wis-

" dom, refused to glorify as God him that

" really was God, degenerated into so

" low a Kind of Folly as to give that

" same Glory to some thing else that was

" not God ; to an Image made like to

" corruptible Man ; nay even to Birds and

" four-footed Beasts, and creeping Things."

And the Consequence of this was, that

God abandoned them to an unnatural

Abuse of their Affection in other Respects ;

to a *reprobate Mind*, as the Apostle there

speaks ; that is, a Mind lost to all true

Sense of Things, and which confounds all

Distinction between Right and Wrong.

And it could not well be otherwise : For

the Mind and Heart, the Judgment and

Affection being so far perverted in the

Grand Article of all, and receiving a

wrong Direction at the very Fountain-

Head, it is no wonder to find them af-

terwards out of their right Channel. For

where the Whole is Wrong, how can it

be

be but that every Part must be distorted out of its natural Situation ?

SERM.

VL

For can we give a greater Reason for loving any Thing in the World, than we have for loving God ? If any Thing on Earth has just Pretensions to a Share of our Love, does not God for the same Reason, whatever it be, demand the Whole ? For every Thing that is good or lovely in the Creature, is it not a Beam and Emanation from that infinite Goodness and Loveliness comprehended in the Divine Being ? To love at all therefore, (as we must all do) and not to love God, is to love without Reason, nay, contrary to the Highest Reason : Since whatever Charm it be that draws our Love, if it be any thing that really deserves it either for Use or Beauty, that very Charm, and the Power of perceiving it, was at first received from God, and is still upheld by him. It is impossible therefore to with-hold from him this Tribute of our Affection, and to place it any other where, but as I said at first, by denying his Unity and Perfection, and placing in the Creature some Good unoriginated

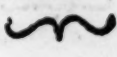
SERM. ginated and independent upon the Creator:

VI. That is, some Portion of the Divinity.

But this Devotion of the whole Heart to God then, is it such that we must for that Reason destroy those Affections which we naturally bear to Men and Things? Far from it: And this was what we proposed to shew in the

Second Place, That this does by no means interfere with those natural Affections and Duties which we owe to Men, but on the contrary is the only right Foundation of all Duty and Affection whatsoever.

Without all doubt the great Objections that have been made to this Doctrine, have arisen from the unskilful Explications put upon it by some good Men too much warmed, who seem to have described it in such a Manner as to have left no room for any other Duty whatsoever. They have understood that in an exclusive Sense, which should have been explained in a comprehensive one. My meaning is this. God Almighty requires us to love him with

with our whole Heart and Soul. This is SERM.
certainly the most reasonable Thing in the VI.
World, for he possesses every Thing that 
naturally claims Love. Hence in order
to magnify this Divine Love, it has been
thought necessary to under-value every
other: If we were allowed to love Man,
or any of those good Things here, it was
I know not how, by way of Indulgence
or Compassion to the Infirmities of Man
in this corrupted State; but it was really
so much stolen from God. And conse-
quently as *Tertullian* somewhere in the
Height of his Zeal against Incontinence,
says, that Marriage itself is but a licensed
Kind of Impurity, so this Love was a
Kind of allowed Robbery: And by De-
grees, from the most exalted Notions of
God, and the Love that is due to him,
they have proceeded first to despise, and
then to hate the World, and every Thing
that is in it, and Man especially above all.
They have considered God as I know not
what Kind of Perfection standing outside
the World, and having but little Affinity
or Connexion with it; and therefore the
more

SERM. more vehemently they have loved God,
 VI. still the further they are removed from
 the World, and the greater is their Aver-
 sion to it: And hence the Love of Solitude
 and a monastick Life.

But this certainly is a great and very dangerous Perversion of a noble Truth. For this Love of God with the whole Heart, can never be justified but in that Sense in which it comprehends and in-wraps all other Loves within it, and consequently instead of destroying them, makes every one reasonable and necessary in their several Measures and Proportions.

If God were one Thing, and the World another wholly independent of him, it were another Case: But as it is, it is Non-sense to talk of loving God, and hating the World which is the Work of God; to love God and hate Man who was made in the Image of God; to love him in his Person, and to hate him in all the Communications which he has been pleased to make of Himself. And therefore St. *John* tells us expressly in his 1st Epistle and ivth Chapter, that *if a Man say, I love God,*

God, and hateth his Brother, he is a Liar: SERM.

And the Reason he gives for it is very ^{VI.}
 strong and convincing; *For he that loveth*
not his Brother whom he hath seen, how can
he Love God whom he hath not seen? If
 every Thing that he sees be a proper Ob-
 ject for his Hatred, which Way or by
 what Steps shall he ascend to the Love of
 God? If every Thing that we see of God
 be to be hated, how can we love That
 of him which we do not see? Shall not
 we judge of the Fountain by the Stream?
 To pretend therefore to love God at the
 same Time that we hate our Brother, is
 Absurdity and Contradiction; it is a Lie:
 We don't love God, but we only hate
 Man, and under that Cover of loving God
 we are feeding and gratifying a general
 Malevolence, or at least a black Melan-
 choly which throws a Cloud over all the
 Divine Administration. And therefore to
 prevent any Mistakes of this Kind, he
 wisely subjoins in the next Verse, *This*
Commandment have we from him, that he
who loveth God, love his Brother also. We
 must not think to atone for a Want of
 M Affection

SERM. Affection to our Brother by any pretended
VI. Love of God.

So far therefore is the Love of God, rightly understood, from clashing with our Love to Men, that it is a necessary Foundation for it: For, for the same Reason that we love God absolutely and without reserve, with the whole Strength of our Soul, we shall of Necessity love whatever proceeds from him, according to that Measure of Goodness and Amiability that he has impressed upon it, and in proportion as it approaches nearer to that great Exemplar of all Perfection.

Now this Love of God at the Bottom will sweeten and mellow the Mind, and gently dispose it to believe well of Things, to relish the Good that is in them, and to be open to those delightful Influences which they are for ever shedding upon us. If we love God (which cannot be without placing in him all Goodness and Perfection) we shall always come to Men and Things with a Prepossession in their Favour; for we shall consider them all as so many Streamings from his Perfection,

tion, as coming from a Hand which made them right ; and tho' Men have since corrupted themselves greatly, and followed Ways of Happiness of their own Invention, yet still after all, preserving strong and deep Impressions of that primitive Rectitude and Integrity which was stamped upon them. In a Word, as long as we think well of God, we shall think well of the Whole : And that will be a noble Foundation of Love to Mankind, and to particular Men ; and being at the Bottom of all those little Discontents which arise between Man and Man from clashing Interests, will be strong enough to work them off ; and we shall be able always after those little Ruffles, without much Difficulty, to settle again into that blessed Peace of Mind, which is the natural Fruit of this universal Love.

Whereas on the contrary, without this Love of God, which ought to be the Ground of all others, and which will of Course unite and cement them into one noble and magnificent Structure, it is all Madness, Distraction and Confusion. If

SERM. we Love at all, it is at random, from
 VI. meer Humour and Caprice; we shall Love
 that more which deserves it less, or it
 may be that which deserves to be hated :
 Wholly led by Whimsies and Trifles, we
 shall not regard the true Proportions of
 Things, which only ought to regulate our
 Affections: For if we did so, the very
 same Reason, as it hath been said before,
 which leads us to Love any one Thing
 in the World, would carry us effectually
 to the Love of God. And it is really the
 greatest Object of Compassion in the
 World, a Soul wanting this natural Bal-
 last, tossing to and fro, rolling up and
 down from Trifle to Trifle, offering his
 Love to every idle Amusement, which
 does at the same Time as good as tell
 him, it is not in me.

Or else wanting this natural Ground of
 Love, we shall it may be, substitute a
 Ground of Hatred, Malevolence and ill
 Humour in its Stead; and accordingly
 explain all Things from a Scheme of Prin-
 ciples drawn from it; come to every
 Thing with Prejudices against it; throw

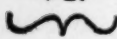
a Tincture of Evil upon every Thing that is Good ; and like the *Locusts* in the Prophet *Joel*, turn a Garden of *Eden* into a desolate Wilderness. With this Bottom

SERM.
VI.

of Evil a Man may Love indeed, he may take Pleasure and Laugh ; but it will be by Accident : He will love that Man who will join with him in hating all others, that is, he will love out of pure Spite and Hatred : He will take Pleasure in Satyrs and Invectives against Mankind, when he sees Humanity disgraced, and brought from that Rank of Dignity in which Religion has placed it down, below the Brute Creation : He will laugh to see all Nature represented ridiculous : But in all this Appearance of Mirth, he will be so far from tasting any real Joy, that every Instance of this ill-placed Pleasure is truly a Curse to him, and nails him down more surely to Misery by confirming him in that Ground of Melancholy and ill Humour.

Now the Love of God diffused over the Soul, is, as I hinted before, the proper and natural Corrective to these four Humours. For as we *love God with our whole Souls*,

SERM. we shall love every Thing that is derived

VI.  from him with such a Portion of them as falls to its Share. And thus we may innocently and virtuously, and even nobly love the whole Creation, and every Part of it, not now as Idols set up in Opposition to God, but in that well-proportioned Subordination to him which constitutes the Beauty and Unity of this great Fabrick. Thus the Love of the Creature, from being Idolatry, in which View the greatest and most perfect of all created Beings must melt into nothing before the supreme Source of all Perfection ; instead of being Idolatry, I say, this Affection we bestow on Things will be consecrated into the Love and Service of God ; every Passion of the Soul will be sanctified and assume the Nature of Religion ; in loving all those good Things which are the Gifts of God in their due Measure (and further than that they are not really good at all) we shall love God, in praising and honouring Men we shall glorify God, and *whether we eat or drink, or whatever we do, we shall do it all to his Glory.* This is

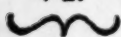
is properly Holiness which is the utmost SERM.
Dignity of Human Nature: In Substance ~~VI.~~
indeed it does not differ from Virtue; but
it is Virtue made illustrious by a Tincture
of Divinity, which every Action receives
from the Idea of God which is united
to it.

And now after this, little more need
be said to shew the Rank which this Pre-
cept holds in Religion, which was the

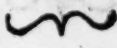
Third and last Thing proposed, That
the Love of God is *the first and great Com-
mandment*, the most essential and indis-
pensable of all others. Enough has been
said already to put this Matter out of all
Dispute: For if the Whole be greater than
its Part; if the All-good himself be some
thing more perfect than one Beam and
Communication of his Goodness; it must
be more right to love God than to love
our Neighbour: For in loving God we
love our Neighbour too; but to complete
it, together with Him this whole beau-
tiful System of Things, and beyond them
still an unfathomable Depth of unknown

SERM. Beauty and Goodness which is all center'd in the Deity.

VI.

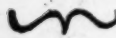


We do wrong therefore to make this a secondary Duty and subservient to others more important. It is first in its own Nature, in its Consequence to us and our Happiness, both publick and private, internal and external, here and hereafter. And this is so plain at first Sight, that nothing could have brought it in Question but the forementioned Abuse of the Love of God, by which some had understood the Love of a strange Kind of solitary Perfection, which was totally distinguished from every other, and therefore might subsist of itself, without comprehending that Love which we ought to bear to every Thing lovely in its several Proportion. Hence it might bear a Dispute, whether this Love or that were more to be chosen; whether we were more concerned to love our Brother that was near us, and in whose Welfare our own was so much intwisted, or a Being however excellent in himself, yet so far removed from us as those Notions placed God. But it could never enter

enter into the Heart of Man to dispute the SERM.
Pre-eminence of the divine Love as we VI.
have explained it: For it would be indeed 
to place Man in the Throne of God; for
however we might express ourselves in
Words, there we truly place God, there
our Heart affirms him to be, where we
place our highest Love and Affection:
For there we conceive the supreme Good.

And as the Love of God is undoubtedly,
in its own Nature and Importance to
us, first and superior to the Love of Man,
so must the Actions that proceed from it
of Course be more noble and valuable,
as coming from a larger Principle. The
Question here is not whether we are to
prefer the moral or the positive Part of
our Duty; whether Acts of Beneficence,
or those which are more strictly called
Religious Actions; for both One and the
Other are comprehended under the Love
of God in the large Sense in which we
have been understanding it: But whether
there be not more Worth in an Action
of either Kind proceeding from the Love
of God, and the Honour we bear him,
than

SERM. than when it is wholly terminated in Man.

VI.  It is plain that we may do the same Thing in either of these Views. We may be just and honest purely as these are Civil Virtues, and tend to promote the Happiness of Mankind; and so we may go to Church and perform Acts of Devotion, purely as it is a Civil Convenience and Necessary to preserve Order and Regularity among Men; that is, we may do both these from a Principle which rests ultimately in Man, without any further Regard: Or we may perform them both with a Regard to the Divine Administration, as together with the present Interest of Man they make a Part of that universal Order and everlasting Righteousness in which the eternal Well-Being of the Whole is founded. In one Sense they are the Grounds of Human Prosperity; in the other they are the Pillars of the World itself. Upon this Consideration therefore it seems very plain, that an Action proceeding from the Love of God must in itself be more noble and perfect than that which proceeds from the Love of Man; for

for they must be proportioned one to the other, as the Principles from which they flow. SERM.
VI.
~

I purposely avoid now every Thing that looks like Controversy, and therefore I do not enquire by which Kind of Actions we most promote the Honour of God, and best express the Love we bear to him, whether those we commonly call Moral Actions, or Religious Duties; but it is very evident that the Worth of the Latter is not to be measured purely by the Reference they have to the Former. Religious Duties are not valuable only because they promote Morality: For this would be to place a Regard to Man uppermost; to make Man Principal and God Subservient: But One and the Other derive all their Worth from the Principle that animates them. Religion is nothing without the Love of God, which is the Soul and Spirit of it; and means the Love of that eternal Being that is the Creator and Governor of the World and Father of Men, and consequently comprehends within it the Love of our Brother, without which
it

SERM. it is not the Love of God, but of some-

VI. thing else: And again, Actions of Beneficence are nothing without real Charity and the unfeigned Love of our Brother, which itself must preserve its due Subordination to the supreme Object of our Affection.

'Tis this Love of God, not in Opposition to the Love of Man, but necessarily comprehensive of it, if it be true and genuine, that Religion is wholly designed to cultivate. For tho' the Worship of God be seated primarily in the Spirit, yet it is impossible but it must discover itself by external Actions suited to it, which as they naturally accompany it, so they naturally cherish that internal Disposition. And a Man may as well pretend to love his Neighbour in his Heart without one Action of Beneficence or Charity, as to love God in Truth without Actions of Piety and Devotion. Such a quiet unactive dead Love as that is, which discovers itself by no Fruits at all, can be no more acceptable to God, than that Faith which does not operate by Works. They
are

On the Love of God.

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are indeed neither valuable without the SERM.
other, because they can neither truly sub- VI.
sist without the other. ~~~~~

Let us therefore all be perswaded to join together what God has thus closely united ; the Love of God with the Love of Man ; the Love of the Heart with the proper Expressions of Piety and Charity that grow from it. For *this is the Law and the Prophets* : So shall we be happy here, and obtain that everlasting Beatitude in the World to come ; whither, O God Almighty, Conduct us all for *Jesus Christ's* Sake ! *Amen.*



SERMON

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S E R M O N VII.

Christianity the Completion of
the Law.

MATTHEW V. 17.

*Think not that I am come to destroy the Law
and the Prophets ; I am not come to de-
stroy, but to fulfil.*



F we look closely, we shall per- SERM.
ceive one Design running thro' VII.
this most excellent Discourse
of our *Saviour* from the Be-
ginning to the End. He was come into
the World to introduce the Kingdom of
Heaven

SERM. Heaven among Men ; and it was necessary
VII. that the Subjects of this Kingdom should
be conformed to its Laws, and act agree-
ably to the Nature of it. They must have
Affections and Dispositions adapted to it.
For to be naturalized into the Kingdom
of Heaven, and yet in every respect to be-
have ourselves as Members of one of these
Kingdoms of the Earth ; to have no Af-
fections, no Solicitudes but what arise
from the Nature of these earthly Com-
munities, is full as absurd as if a Person
naturalized into one Kingdom should have
all his Fortunes in another, and all his
Happiness depending upon the Prosperity
of it. Can such a Man make a good
Subject here ? Will not his *Heart be where
his Treasure is* ? Can he *serve* That and
This too both at once sincerely ?

With this leading Notion to direct us,
many of those Precepts of our Saviour,
which otherwise would appear hard Say-
ings, come in easy and conformable to
his Design. For if the supreme Beatitude
of Man is to be found only in this King-
dom of Heaven, then it is plain that we
must

Completion of the Law.

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must not always take our Measures of SERM.
Happiness from those Appearances of VII.
Pleasure and Gaiety upon Earth. It will
be necessary sometimes, when Righteous-
ness and the Cause of the Kingdom of
Heaven require it, to pass thro' Mourning,
Reproach and Persecution in our Way to
Blessedness. A humble, easy, merciful,
innocent and peaceable Temper, a Mode-
ration for this World, and a Thirst after
substantial Good, however improper they
may be to make Acquisitions here, are
yet necessary Qualifications for an Inhe-
ritance in this Kingdom. For by the
Way, that Expression in the *4th Verse*,
Blessed are the Meek, for they shall inherit
the Earth, appears to have no Concern
with any earthly Possession: To *inherit*
the Land being a common Phrase, and
meaning no more than simply to inherit
or possess, the Nature of this Inheritance
must be determined by the Subject which
our *Saviour* is treating, and therefore in
this Place can be no other than an Inhe-
ritance or Possession in the Kingdom of
Heaven.

N

If

SERM.

VII.

If the Laws of this Kingdom are Righteousness itself, the last Standard of Justice, and the Laws of earthly Kingdoms are no otherwise binding than as they are conformed to this Standard; then it may sometimes happen in Cases of Insult, Oppression and Violence, where the national Laws give a Right of Vengeance and Reparation, it may sometimes happen, I say, to be fit to Sacrifice those inferior Rights to a higher View: That is, as before, when the Cause of true Righteousness and the Interests of the Kingdom of Heaven require it: And at all Times this Consideration of a higher Justice will of Course give some Moderation to our Claims. And accordingly we must lend, give, and forgive, not absolutely according to the Rules and Measures of this World, but with an Eye to the supreme Rule of Right and Fitness.

Again, If we are all Subjects of this heavenly Kingdom, then we must regulate our Friendship and our Enmity, our Love and our Hatred by the Measure of this Kingdom. There is then a Love due
to

to all the World, as being all Fellow-Ci-
tizens of the one common Country of
Mankind. But if we love and hate still

SERM.
VII.

by no other Measure than the private Interests of Persons, Families, Societies or Nations of Men, if we love the Friends and hate the Enemies of these only, and with regard only to these partial Interests, how are we Members of the Kingdom of Heaven? What are we other than *Publicans*, or any Clan of Men however joined? For these are all hearty in their own Interests, and those of their Society, love its Friends and hate its Enemies. And so if all our Cares and Disquietudes are center'd in eating, and drinking, and clothing, and the other Conveniences of this World, how do we appear to *look to another Country*? The *Gentiles* who profess to seek nothing further, can do no more than this. Our first Concern therefore must be about the Kingdom of Heaven, and our Interest in That. And this comprehending all others, will of Necessity give Bounds and Rules to the infe-

SERM. inferior ones, which must all be prosecuted with an Affection proportioned to their Moment here.

To this Kingdom of Heaven must all our Actions ultimately be referred: We must do Alms, we must Fast, we must Pray with a View to this. For which Reason undoubtedly it is that our Blessed *Saviour* bids us direct our Prayers to the King of this Kingdom, *Our Father which is in Heaven*, and to pray that *his Name be hallowed, his Kingdom come*. But if instead of this we do these or any other Acts of Religion from Motives of Reputation or Gain, or as Things convenient only to preserve Order and Regularity in a Family or State, it is evident that we do not act then as Members of this Kingdom, and must not expect any Reward from its King: For we have it in obtaining those Advantages which we propose.

This is sufficient to let us see the general Course of the Argument which appears in this Discourse of *Jesus Christ*. But to this there was one Objection which our *Saviour* obviates in the Words of my
Text.

Completion of the Law.

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Text. This Doctrine might seem to untie SERM.
VII.
the Bonds of all Society, to destroy all
Laws of Nations, and with the rest, that
of *Moses*, which was wholly calculated to
suit the Nation of the *Jews* only. For
if every Thing must be referred to the
Kingdom of Heaven and its Laws, and
that Kingdom comprehends all Mankind,
then in Truth there is but this one King-
dom, and all other Distinctions are of
Course dissolved and lost: *Jews* and *Gen-
tiles* are all one here, and *Moses* and the
Prophets who went upon the *Jewish* Estab-
lishment, have no longer any Place.
This was natural enough to object; for
which Reason *Jesus Christ* says, *Think not*
(intimating that otherwise Men might be
apt to think so) *Think not that I am come*
to destroy the Law and the Prophets: I am
not come to destroy, but to fulfil. And ac-
cordingly he proceeds to shew that he is
not come to destroy any Truth or any
Duty of the antient Dispensation, but to
advance and carry them to the utmost
Pitch of Consummation: Not one jot or
one tittle, not the least Commandment of

SERM. the Law was to be annihilated, but in-
VII. stead of that, completed and perfected.

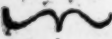
He does not destroy the *Righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees*, but only says that *the Righteousness of his Disciples* must exceed *Theirs*, or they could not for Reasons above-mentioned be *Members of the Kingdom of Heaven*; he goes on to instance in many particular Commandments of the Law; *Thou shalt not Murder; Thou shalt not commit Adultery; Thou shalt not swear falsely*: All these were still Duties as much as ever, but were now extended as far as the Reason of them extended, to forbid rash Anger, Lust, loose Swearing, and whatever was evil in those Sins, and tended to create them. And in the same Proportion is the Penalty enlarged, but not abolished. Every Crime is still justly obnoxious to the *Judgment* and the *Council*, to the Punishments and Censures of this Life: But these are not the proper Inflictions of the Kingdom of Heaven; that knows no other Punishment but the everlasting One, *the Hell of Fire* as it is here called.

Moses

Moses had ordered that no one should *put away his Wife* but in due Form of Law, in order to check in some Measure, causeless Separations and a too promiscuous Abuse of Marriage: And this Law was right as far as it went, all of it that was positive and commanding. But the Statutes of the Kingdom of Heaven carry it to perfection, and admit no Separation at all but what is founded upon the natural Breach of that sacred Union established by God between Man and Woman. SERM.
VII.

Again it was said; *an Eye for an Eye, and a Tooth for a Tooth: And Thou shalt love thy Neighbour and hate thine Enemy.* And rightly said in a civil Consideration, as these Laws are necessary to preserve our civil Interests, to shelter us from Insults, and to defend our Country from its Enemies. But the Kingdom of Heaven requires something further, that we be not wholly confined to any Society upon Earth and the Interests of it, but act as Members of that Kingdom where every Thing is in Perfection, that boundless Kingdom of which God is King, into the Laws of

SERM. which, every Duty, and every Obligation

VII. is ultimately resolved, the Rewards and
 Punishments of which comprehend all
 Happiness and Misery; and consequently
 that we Sacrifice, as I said before, those
 Vengeances and Enmities that arise from
 partial Interests below, when they are in-
 consistent with that one great End of
 Man: In one Word, that we be *perfect as*
our Father which is in Heaven is perfect.

Thus in order to give the full Sense of
 our *Lord* in these Words, *I am not come*
to destroy, but to fulfil, I have found it ne-
 cessary to explain somewhat more at large
 the general Tendency and Argument of
 his whole Sermon. And in doing this,
 I have done a great deal towards the Sub-
 ject itself, which will now be dispatched
 in much fewer Words. For in order to
 confirm the Truth which our *Saviour* here
 in the *Text* pronounces, that he is *not*
come to destroy the Law and the Prophets,
but to fulfil them, I propose to shew,

First, That the *Law and the Prophets*
 were in themselves incomplete and wanted
 Perfection.

Secondly,

Completion of the Law.

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Secondly, That *Jesus Christ* filled up what was wanting to them, and so absolutely perfected the Scheme of Religion which was before defective. And

SERM.
VII.
~

Lastly, That this Perfection superinduced by *Jesus Christ*, destroyed no real Truth or Duty of the *Law*, but left them still subsisting in their full Force.

This was a wide Subject, and might have been treated to good purpose many Ways ; but I chuse this, because it seems to me most conformed to the true Intention of our blessed *Saviour* : And accordingly

I begin with the *first*, That the *Law* and the *Prophets* were in themselves incomplete and wanted Perfection. And to prove this, we need only to consider what was hinted before, that that whole Dispensation was referred to the People of the *Jews* only, and adapted to the Interests of that one Nation. We hardly know any thing of God but by his Dealings with them. Those Matters of the most universal Concern to Mankind, the
Creation,

SERM. *Creation, the Fall, the Flood, the Disper-*
 VII. *sion, &c.* besides that they are past lightly
 over, are evidently introduced only to be
 a Foundation for that peculiar People,
 and carry in them a visible Leaning to-
 wards them.

When in *Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob*
 the whole Nation of the *Jews* was com-
 prized in a single Family, the Favour of
 God appeared to be confined to that Fa-
 mily, and exhibited itself in a Manner
 accommodated to that Family-State of the
Jews. No settled Standard of Religion
 or Justice : No established Way of com-
 municating the divine Influences in an
 even and regular Course : Only occasional
 Revelations and Appearances : They con-
 sulting God, and God giving them Answers
 according to the particular Circumstances
 and Exigencies of their Families.

Afterwards when the *Jews* were be-
 come a numerous People, and *by a strong*
Hand and mighty Arm being delivered from
 their Servitude in *Egypt*, they required
 some Order and Government among them-
 selves ; then it became necessary that
 Things

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Things should assume another Form, and the Favour of God appear to them in a national Establishment of Religion and Justice; thro' which the divine Blessing should be conveyed to them by a steady and constant Administration. And accordingly God gave them the *Law* by *Moses*. SERM. VII.

From this Time they were no longer to consult God in that Simplicity in which the *Patriarchs* had done, when they needed only to ask and to receive an Answer: The Word of God was deposited with the *Priests* and *Magistrates*, who were therefore called Gods, and invested with a Portion of his Spirit: And there they were to apply in all their Doubts. This however not so absolutely settled, but that still, especially in the Confines of the two Administrations, and before they had acquired a perfect Establishment, upon great Occasions *there* remained many Instances of an extraordinary Intercourse between God and them. Till at last from the Times of *David*, when their Affairs were settled upon a firm Bottom, and they might

SERM. might safely be trusted to the natural Ope-

VII. ration of the *Law*; to the Observance or
Neglect of That, are constantly attributed
their Prosperity and Adversity: If any
Prophet arose, it was to recall them to
that Rule: Very rarely any miraculous
Interposition, but with a Design to recover
the Honour and Credit of the *Law*. Nor
needed there any Thing farther, since all
the Blessings that can attend a Nation,
were to depend upon their Obedience to
it, and every Curse to follow the Breach
of it.

And here it may be worth observing,
that the Care and Providence of God to-
wards his People were as truly exerted in
providing them a Body of Laws Civil and
Religious, the Observation of which should
carry with it an uninterrupted Stream of
divine Favour, as by those more imme-
diate Intercourses during their Infant-State.
The Degree of Favour bestowed upon
them we may suppose nearly the same in
either, but operating in a Manner agree-
able to their respective Circumstances; here
in

Completion of the Law.

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in one steady Flow, there by Gushes and SERM.
Intermissions. VII.

Thus does God throughout this whole Economy appear to be the God of the *Jews*, and the *Law* (as well the civil as the religious Part of it) to be a national Establishment, adapted to promote the Prosperity of that one Nation. For this Reason it was necessary that every Thing should be marked out and defined, what should be Murder, what Adultery, or Perjury, what Satisfaction, what Punishment, what Testimony : In a Word, whatever we now do in a civil Government, was then done, that the Judges might have a Rule to walk by. But the Thoughts and Intentions which lead to those Crimes, those Degrees which fall beneath the Definition of the *Law*, were for the same Reason less regarded.

In Religion the external Action and a punctuality in it is every where required, because that only can fall under the Cognizance of a Government. Whether they bore an inward Piety towards God, might be a Secret ; but the outward Expression

was

SERM. was visible and subject to the Notice of
VII. Man. Whether they had the true Repentance of the Heart, was uncertain; but to do Honour to God by an open Atonement and Confession, was within the Power of the *Law* to compel, and that consequently it required. As in Justice, to abstain from doing Injury, and where it is done, to make Reparation the *Law* can oblige; but whether it proceeds from a true Principle of Love to our Neighbour, does not properly belong to any Tribunal here to inquire into.

Their Worship of God was in the Nature of it accommodated to them only, and accordingly it followed their Fortunes. When they travelled in the *Wilderness* and pitched in *Tents*, he travelled with them and pitched in a *Tent*: When they were entered into their *Rest*, the *Ark of God* rested with them: When they had their *Houses* and *Palaces*, God had his *Temple* where the *Jewish* Worship was all center'd. Thither were all the Sacrifices to be brought: There were all the *Jews* to meet three Times a Year, at Festivals proper to the

the Seasons of that Climate. These Things SERM.
 were highly expedient to maintain the VII.
 Unity of a national Church, and *Jerusa-*
lem very conveniently situated to be the
 Center of it : The Sacrifices, the Cere-
 monies, the Priests, the Vestments of the
 Priests all described to the most minute
 Particularity, are fitted to one People ; for
 it is absolutely necessary to Order and
 Beauty, that every Thing be suited to them
 that wear it : But for the same Reason for
 which they are suited to one Nation, they
 must be improper for all.

The Promises are every Kind of national Prosperity, and tend all to this, that
their Days may be long in the Land which
the Lord their God giveth them. The
 Threatnings are all the Curses that can
 befall a People, completed in this, to
 be *driven from that good Land flowing*
with Milk and Honey. In short, it is evi-
 dent that their whole polity Religious and
 Civil, was adapted to the Nature, and
 directed to the Advantage of this one Peo-
 ple, and that *Moses* and the *Prophets* acted
 as Ministers in this Dispensation ; accord-
 ing

SERM. ing to which the *Jews* were the Holy
VII. chosen and peculiar People, and of Course
separated from all the Nations of the
World.

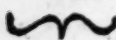
Now if we went upon the Heathen Scheme of many Deities, every one of which had his favourite Nation, and promoted its Prosperity to the utmost of his Power, and the God of the *Jews* differed from those of other Nations no otherwise than as perhaps he was something greater and more powerful ; there might be then a Perfection in the *Jewish* Religion ; I mean so much Perfection as could be expected under such a State of Things, a Religion perfectly adapted to its Deity. But what Proportion is there between one All-perfect God and such a Scheme of Religion ? To suppose an infinite and eternal Being, and at the same Time all his Favours and Influences confined to a particular Nation, is the utmost Absurdity. Were he but One of the many Heathen Divinities, he might have Favours to bestow for Reasons peculiar to this or that Nation, distribute them
by

by Humour and Caprice, by Likings or Grudges unaccountable: But an infinite Being can make no Distinctions of Time or Place; he can regard nothing but according to the eternal Differences of Things; if he Blesses, it must be that which deserves Blessing, wherever it be; and if he Punishes, it must be that which deserves Punishment, without any Respect of Persons.

In blessing *Abraham*, for Instance (it is a Reasoning which we learn from *St. Paul*) he blesses all Mankind as far as they are what *Abraham* was, as far as they possess his Righteousness and Piety, and every Degree of it in a Measure proportioned. And hence it comes to pass that from the Blessing bestowed upon *Abraham* for his Faith, there lies an infallible Argument that God will bless this Faith wherever it be found; and not only that high Degree of Faith with that high Degree of Favour, but every smaller Measure according to its Rank. The same Favour which he shewed the People of the *Jews*, he must necessarily shew to all the Nations of the Earth in the same Circum-

SERM. stances, and in all Circumstances according to their several Proportions.

VII.



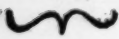
Again, From this Perfection of the Deity it follows, that he cannot be led in his Judgment by the external Indications of Justice or Piety, but by the very Reality and Substance which are seated in the Heart. A Man might appear at *Jerusalem* very regularly at the stated Seasons from Principles of Fashion or Reputation, or Fear of the Punishment of the *Law*, or some other Reason widely different from that of true Piety or Gratitude towards God: He might offer Sacrifices for Sin, and yet be destitute of a true Sense of the Iniquity of it, and consequently the Repentance which accompanies it: He might *pray* and *fast* and *give Alms* (which are our *Saviour's* Instances) in good Order as to all the external Requisites, and yet want what will recommend him to his *Father in Heaven*.

From the same Perfection of our *Heavenly Father*, *Jesus Christ* argues in the most convincing Manner, that not only Murder, Adultery, Perjury, and those Sins which

which are so full grown as to come within the Definition of the *Law*, not They only are criminal and deserving Punishment ; but all Intentions, Wishes, and secret Workings of the Soul, every Degree and Step towards them is intitled to its Punishment as truly as any of these : Those Names of Reproach which the *Law* takes no Notice of, have yet their Venom and Malignity as truly as those within the *Law*, and therefore a Punishment necessarily belonging to them from a most righteous Tribunal.

The *Jews* therefore, so long as they preserved uncorrupt a right Notion of one infinite, all-knowing and just God, had always something which pointed to a Scheme of Things more perfect. And the *Prophets*, especially the later Ones, make bold Strokes towards it, very frequently extolling real, solid, and substantial Piety and Virtue, not without expressing some Contempt for those Shews which the *Law of Moses* enjoined. But the perfect Completion of the *Law and the Pro-*

SERM. *phets* was reserved to *Jesus Christ*; and this
VII. was the



Second Thing I proposed to shew; that he filled up what was wanting to Them, and so absolutely perfected the Scheme of Religion which was before defective.

To know what was the Religion of *Jesus Christ*, we have nothing to do but to make every thing *perfect as our Father which is in Heaven is perfect*: That is, to make every Part of the Structure corresponding to that great Foundation. We must therefore pull down that *Wall of Partition* which enclosed the *Jewish Nation*, and distinguished them from the rest of the World; extend every Thing in the *Law of Moses*, which there is applied to one Nation, as far as the Reason of it extends; and make that universal and infinite which is there limited and confined. There will remain then still all the same Proportions, but only every Limb and Feature of the *Law* will be infinitely swelled. And according to that noble Observation of the *Apostle* to the *Hebrews*,
the

the *Law* will then appear to be an exact *SERM.*
Pattern, a Model and Exemplar of *Hea-* VII.
venly Things, but not *the Heavenly Things*
themselves: These were reserved till *the*
Fullness of Time to be discovered by the
Gospel, when *the Veil should be drawn aside*,
 and the great Mystery of Ages disclosed.

If we understand the Actions of God
 in a Manner worthy of him, we must
 conclude them to be infinite and eternal
 as Himself. By one and the same Sim-
 plicity of Action he shewed Grace to
Abraham some Thousands of Years ago,
 he still shews it, and will do so to Eter-
 nity; except we could suppose that he can
 stand differently to the same Things, and
 that what is true in one Age and in one
 Place, may be false in another. Instead
 of *Abraham* therefore, put that Piety and
 Faith for which God shewed him Grace;
 and instead of that particular Grace which
 was shewn to *Abraham*, put that whole
 Sum of Grace which he shews to Man-
 kind; and that will be the Doctrine of
Jesus Christ concerning the *Grace of God*:
 That there is a Grace of God which for

SERM. ever accompanies in different Measures
 VII. every Degree of Piety and Faith. Thus
 { *the Law* will give us an Example of this
 eternal Truth in the Person of *Abraham*
 exhibited in the particular Manner, and
 with the Circumstances related in his
 History, but *Grace* itself came by *Jesus*
Christ: This the Truth, and That one
 Exhibition of the Truth.

The *Law of Moses* consisted in a parti-
 cular Form of Justice and Religion pre-
 scribed to the *Jews*, which was to be re-
 warded with every Kind of national Pro-
 sperity. Instead therefore of the *Jewish*
Law, put absolute Justice and everlasting
 Righteousness the Duty of all Mankind:
 Instead of the *Jewish Religion*, put real
 and substantial Worship of the *Spirit*:
 Instead of *Canaan* and national Prosperity,
 put *Heaven* and Beatitude itself: And this
 will be the *Christian Doctrine* of the Re-
 ward promised to Righteousness. The
Law of Moses will be one Exemplifica-
 tion of this Truth, but *Christianity* is the
 Truth itself.

Every

Every Offence against the *Law of Moses*, SERM.
VII.
whether in Justice or Religion, had a Punishment adapted to it, a temporal and a national Punishment which we are to suppose equivalent to the Injury done to the Publick by the Transgression. There were established Reparations to God by some Offerings for Sin, which ought to be so contrived as by the Nature of the Satisfaction to make amends for the Dishonour put upon the *Jewish* Religion. And where this could not be done, and the Crime exceeded all Reparation, there nothing remained but Death, which was an absolute Deprivation of every temporal Advantage. Put this into *Christian* Language, and an Offence against *Moses* will here be absolutely Sin against God, and punished by the eternal Laws of his Kingdom. This Kingdom however admits a Satisfaction to be made, but not that enjoined by *Moses*: For that by the Supposition could be but proportioned to the Affront put upon that Religion; and *the Blood of Bulls and of Goats* might wash off Offences against a Religion which consist-

SERM. ed in the Sacrifices of *Bulls and Goats* :

VII. But it could not possibly wash away Sin in the *Christian* Sense ; the Pollution of the Heart and Conscience. It must be a Satisfaction proportioned to the Mind and its Thoughts, just as that external Ceremony of *the Law* was to the Body and its Actions. There must be an adequate Sense of Sin ; a Humiliation of Soul whereby we acknowledge the Justice of God in the Punishment of it ; a Faith in the Death and Sufferings of *Jesus Christ*, whereby we are united to that great Atonement. (It would be going too far from my Subject at present, to enter deeper into this Point.) And without that as under the *Law*, the Offender was left to suffer Death, the last Punishment which That knew, so here the Sinner is of Necessity cut off from Life in the *Gospel*-Sense, and left under the Power of an eternal Death, an absolute Incapacity of Happiness.

Again, what *Moses* was to the *Jewish* Nation, that same is *Jesus Christ* absolutely and without Restriction to all Mankind.

In

In this great Family of the World *Moses* SERM.
was a Servant that had a particular Part VII.
assigned him, and he *was faithful* in his
Office: But he was himself but one of
the Family, and his Office but one Branch
of that universal Superintendence vested
in the *Son*. *Moses* was employed by God
in dispensing a certain Portion of his
Word, but *Jesus Christ* is the Word itself.
God has but one Word, but *great is the*
Company of those that publish it; it is
heard *at sundry Times, and in divers Man-*
ners, from everlasting to everlasting. And
the Proportion would be all lost, if you
could suppose *Jesus Christ* to be any thing
less than this Word embodied; for thus
only does he fill his Character. Thus
will all the Communications which can
possibly proceed from God to Man, pass
thro' him, and by this Fulness of the
Deity he will be qualified to represent
God to Man, as by the Fulness of his
Humanity to represent Man to God.

All this Perfection of *Christianity* ne-
cessarily flows (as I have observed before)
from the Perfection of the Deity. For if
God

SERM. God be perfect, his Government, his Religion, his Word, his Grace and Truth is perfect; and this Perfection in God and his Government, requires of Course a Perfection of Faith and Obedience in us to correspond to it; and makes it reasonable that there be a Perfection of Rewards and Punishments to support this high Claim, and make it all consistent.

From this Perfection of God, and that of the *Christian* Religion which is built upon it, according to which, *Christianity* appears to be not another Thing from the *Law*, but the *Law* itself filled up to the Measure of the Divine Being; it becomes necessary to understand every Thing in the *Law* in a Sense suited to the *Christian* Economy: *Jesus Christ* as the Son and Heir of all Things, is the natural Lord of all the Truth which is dispensed by his Ministers and Servants: He is the *One Prophet*, in whom all their Inspirations are center'd; the *One Atonement* in which all Propitiations are comprehended; the *One King* to whom all Homage is

is due. And consequently whatever is SERM.
said in the *Law* relating to these, belongs to VII.
Him, not by way of Accommodation and 

at second hand, but first and principally; and to Them no otherwise than as they are Communications from Him and Members of Him. *Redemption, Salvation, and Life*, which to the *Jews* have a temporary meaning suited to their Situation in this World, the *Christian* must necessarily understand, as it is understood in the *new Testament*, in their fullest Signification of absolute *Salvation*, and *Life Eternal*. And where *Death* and the *Grave* are threatened to Transgression, we can understand nothing else but an *eternal Death*. And this is the first and truest Sense which only can belong to God, who can say nothing but what is absolute and eternal, and which therefore it is impossible for us to give up without giving up the Perfection of the Deity, and the Perfection of the *Christian Religion* which rests upon it.

Without this were *Jesus Christ* but another *Prophet* however Great, and his
Doctrines

SERM. Doctrine but another Doctrine how wise
 VII. soever, and the God of the *Christians* some
 ~~~~~ other God how much soever Superior ; no  
 Argument would lie from one Dispensation  
 to the other ; they would be wholly distinct ; what was said to the *Jews* would  
 be said to them only ; and this latter *Revelation* might destroy and annihilate the  
 former. But this it does not, for *Jesus Christ* came not to destroy, but to fulfil : And  
 this was the

*Last* thing proposed, That the Perfection superinduced by *Jesus Christ* destroys  
 no real Truth or Doctrine of the *Law*,  
 but leaves them still to subsist in their  
 full Force. But as it would be too long,  
 so neither is it necessary to pursue this in  
 all its Extent ; nothing being plainer in  
 the Gross from what has been said before.

For because there is revealed to us by  
*Jesus Christ*, a *universal* Grace of God to  
*all Mankind*, does it follow from thence  
 that God did not exhibit that *particular*  
 Grace to *Abraham* and the Nation of the  
*Jews*

*Jews* which is recorded in their Story? SERM.  
On the contrary, may not we reasonably VII.  
conclude that God has actually exhibited ~~~~~  
it in infinite Manners and Degrees, and  
that this was one of those infinite Exhibitions?

Because we must fast and pray, and do alms in *Secret*, does it follow that there must be no *publick* Prayers, or Fasts or Charities? No surely, these are still as necessary 'as ever, and have as great Advantages towards the preserving a visible Face of Religion and Benevolence in the World, the maintaining Order and Society &c. And provided we do in the secret Retirements of our Soul direct those publick Offices to the Glory of God, we do as truly perform our blessed *Saviour's* Intention, as if we went into the most private Closets.

The *Christian* Worship is a *Worship in Spirit and in Truth*: But must it therefore be performed in no *Place* and at no *Time*, with no devout *Words* or *Gestures* that shall correspond with and cherish this *inward* Piety of the Soul?

The

SERM. The Kingdom of God is the Perfection  
 VII. of all Government, its Laws and Sanctions the most consummate ; but does this exclude all *human Government* ? Destroy all Societies, all Laws and Sanctions among *Men* ? Our Affections must be center'd in *Heaven* ; but must we therefore preserve no Love to our Countries or Families upon Earth ?

No thinking Man, I suppose, will say this : Or he should as well say it in one Instance as in another. We may full as reasonably affirm that *Jesus Christ* came to destroy all civil Government, as all national Religion : And it happens that all those Instances mentioned by our *Saviour* from my *Text* to the End of the *Chapter*, regard moral Duties and civil Rights arising from human Societies, which none ever but a very few Enthusiasts have ventured to suppose that our blessed *Saviour* abolished. In Truth he abolished nothing that is necessary to maintain an Order and Regularity in human Things, but only superadded to it a Perfection arising from



from the Consideration of an eternal Kingdom. SERM.  
VII.

Upon the Whole then it appears, that those two Dispensations of God have each their proper Tendency: One to shew us the Importance of a national Religion, and a national Justice to this World, and the Prosperity of a Nation; the Other the absolute Importance of Religion itself, and Justice itself towards our supreme Beatitude in the Kingdom of Heaven; a Kingdom which does not exclude, but like that Heaven above us, comprehends within it the Earth and all its Interests.

*To God, Father, Son and Holy Ghost, be  
given all Glory, now and ever. Amen.*







# SERMON VIII.

On the Nature of Divine Worship.

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PSALM xcvi. .9.

*Worship the Lord in the Beauty of Holiness.*



**T**HIS is an Expression pretty SERM.  
familiar with the *Psalmist*, and VIII.  
may be understood either as a  
Direction how the Worship of  
God ought to be performed, that is, with  
all Gracefulness and Dignity; or an In-  
vitation to *all the Earth, all the Kin-*  
*dreds of the People, to come into the Courts*  
*of the Lord, and to Worship him in his*  
P holy

SERM. *holy Sanctuary*, which from the Glory and  
VIII. Magnificence of its Structure is here called  
the Beauty of Holiness. In either Sense, whether we consider this as a positive Direction, or only as a model of Worship originally instituted by divine Command, we are given sufficiently to understand, that the Worship of God ought to be performed with a becoming Dignity. I express myself so in general, because I would comprehend the Whole; the Place, the Ceremonies, the Ornaments, the Postures: In a Word, the whole external Face of Worship, every Thing that can add a Beauty, a Gracefulness and Solemnity to the Offices of Religion.

That great Care was taken of this under the antient *Law*, and by the express Direction of God himself, we all know: But at the same Time we are many of us inclined to think, or we argue as if we did think, that this was intirely abolished under the *Christian* Dispensation: That our *Saviour* having pronounced that God ought to be worshipped in Spirit and in Truth, did by that Discountenance and  
Condemn

Condemn all exterior Appearance, and left SERM.  
Religion intirely naked and devested of VIII.  
all Form. It may be worth our while  
therefore to gain some clear Notions of  
this Matter, and to this purpose a Discourse  
on the Subject, especially upon this Oc-  
casion, may be of some Service. Accord-  
ingly I shall

*First*, Consider the Nature of Divine  
Worship; and from thence

*Secondly*, Shew the Necessity of perform-  
ing it *in the Beauty of Holiness*, with a be-  
coming Gracefulness and Solemnity in all  
its Parts. And under this Head I shall  
take Notice of such Objections as may  
occur.

We are *first* then to consider the Nature  
of Divine Worship.

The Word here used, in the Original  
is well known to signify properly the *Pro-  
stration* of the whole Body. There are  
other Words which signify the Bending  
of the Knee, the Bowing of the Head,  
the Inclination of the upper Part of the



SERM. Body : These were all Forms of Humiliation ; but the first the greatest and most  
 VIII. Solemn, by which the *Eastern Nations* expressed their Honour and Reverence to those before whom they were performed. We find no less than three of these together, *Psalm xcv. 6. O come, let us worship and bow down : Let us kneel before the Lord our Maker. And 1 Chron. xxix. 20. All the Congregation blessed, or bent the Knee to the Lord God of their Fathers, and bowed down their Heads, and worshipped, that is, prostrated themselves before the Lord and the King.*

Here it is worth observing, and we shall make some use of this Observation hereafter, that all these Postures of Reverence, even that of Prostration not excepted, were not so appropriated to the divine Worship, but that they were used also to express the Honour that was paid to Princes and others of high Eminence. And it cannot well be otherwise : For when God Almighty requires Honours from us of any Kind to be paid him, it is necessary that he use Words of a known Signi-

Signification, that is, Words that signify SERM.  
 some Things well known and practised by VIII.  
 those to whom he addresses the Com-  
 mand; for otherwise how could it be un-  
 derstood? Just as the Word *Worship* it-  
 self among us, tho' length of Time now  
 begins to confine it to a religious Sense,  
 still remains in some of our Offices in its  
 antient unconfined meaning, whereby it  
 signified no more than Honour or Respect  
 in general, and accordingly is a Title gi-  
 ven to our Magistrates.

So that *Worship* in its original Meaning,  
 as it stands in the *Old Testament*, seems  
 chiefly to intend those Postures of Reve-  
 rence, and particularly Prostration, which  
 were practised when Men would express  
 the highest Respect and Honour to any  
 Person; and consequently divine *Worship*  
 those same Postures when performed in  
 Honour of God, and under a Sense of his  
 Presence.

But as those external Forms were no-  
 thing in Themselves, any further than they  
 were understood to signify an internal Ve-  
 neration of Heart and Mind; so even then

SERM. it must in the very Nature of Things be  
VIII. a necessary Requisite of Worship, that it  
be performed *in Spirit and in Truth*, with  
a correspondent Humility of Mind; for  
otherwise, Motions and Gestures without  
Meaning, would have been nothing but  
ridiculous Mimickry, if not downright  
Mockery, and would in all Ages of the  
World be esteemed nothing else. If *David*  
by any external Indication, or by any Gift  
of Discernment could have seen thro' all  
the Formality of Adoration, a Heart that  
neglected or despised him, we need not  
doubt but he would have thought him-  
self affronted, and resented it accordingly.  
And if so, God Almighty to be sure, "to  
" whom all Hearts be open", must of  
Necessity detest and abominate such an  
empty Appearance. I say this to shew  
that even in those Days, when the Name  
of Worship was given to those external  
Postures of Adoration, they could not  
mean it in any Sense exclusive of the Mind,  
but as they were naturally Significant  
of the Mind, and in fact did ordinarily  
arise

arise from that Humility which they expressed.

SERM.  
VIII.

Again, another very considerable Part of divine Worship, and almost universal in those early Times, was *Sacrifice*. Now as divine Worship in the Sense last mentioned, was nothing but the Honour paid to Almighty God with those Postures whereby they used to express the greatest Reverence to Men, so here it seems that this Custom of Sacrificing in its most comprehensive Sense, was nothing but offering those Presents to God, which they were accustomed to make to their Princes and Great Men. For it is well known that they never then appeared before the Face of a Great Man, (and the same Custom is still observed in the Eastern Nations,) without a Present. There are so many Instances of this throughout the *Old Testament*, upon a thousand Occasions, that it is needless to prove it. By this they signified the Love, and Honour, and Gratitude they bore to their Princes when they offered them some Part selected from

SERM. every Kind of their Possessions, which was  
 VIII. best and most valuable upon any Account.

And this exactly agrees with the most ancient Sacrifice we have upon Record : I mean that of *Cain and Abel*. *Abel*, the History says, *was a Keeper of Sheep*, and *Cain a Tiller of the Ground* ; and at certain Periods, (for so it should be translated) *Cain brought of the Fruit of the Ground an Offering to the Lord*, and *Abel he also brought of the Firstlings of his Flock and of the Fat thereof*, that is, they each brought some of the Produce of their respective Employments in a Way of Present or Offering to the Lord. In such simplicity of Terms is this first Sacrifice described.

Now here again, as in the Case of Postures, the humblest Posture was an Indication of the greatest Reverence ; so the Value, or Richness, or Exquisiteness of the Present must naturally be proportioned to the Esteem of him that made it. And this explains to us the subsequent Story of these two Brethren : For we are told that *the Lord had respect unto Abel and to his*



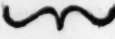
his Offering, but unto Cain and to his Of- SERM.  
fering he had not respect: But why? Why, VIII.  
for this plain Reason, because tho' Cain,  
whether from the Example and Injunctions of *Adam*, now grown into a Custom,  
or from some Sense of the divine Superiority, did at certain stated Times make his Offering to God of the Fruits of the Ground, yet they were only some of the Fruits taken at random without any Choice, they were not the First and the Fairest, the Earliest and Best of their Kind; whereas it is observed of *Abel* expressly, that he brought of the Firstlings of his Flock and the Fat thereof, that is, as we learn afterwards from the *Law*, the Choicest and most valued Part of them. For which Reason when *Cain* afterwards expostulated with God upon the Preference he had given to his Brother, God answers him in this manner, (as the Words will well bear, and the Sense I think requires)  
“ Should not, if thou hadst made a good  
“ Offering (and if thou hast not, it argues  
“ some in-bred Sin, some secret Disre-  
“ spect of God) should not all thy Brother's  
ther's

SERM. "ther's Solicitude center in Thee, all his

VIII. "Care be to please thee, and Thou be

~ "Lord over him?"

This then that I have mentioned seems to be the general Notion that run throughout all Sacrifices, tho' they were afterwards diversified into several Kinds according to the Occasions. Their continual Sacrifices every Day were Offerings made to God every Day in acknowledgement of his continual Protection; Their Anniversary ones were when they *appeared before the Lord* with their Offerings in Commemoration of some remarkable Providence or Event that happened at those Times respectively: Their Peace-Offerings were Presents made to God upon any Prosperity or Success: Their Sin and Trespas-Offerings were Presents offered after any Sin committed against God, and consequently just Apprehensions of his Anger, in order to procure Atonement. In a Word, as many several Occasions as there were of *appearing before God*, so many Kinds of Sacrifices there were, but all of them in the Nature of an Offering or Present; and that conformably to the universal Custom  
of

of never approaching a great Personage SERM.  
without a Present taken from every Thing VIII.  
that was valuable among Men. 

And here as before, we ought to take Notice that this Part of the Worship of God, which consisted in Sacrifice, was not regarded or required purely for the external Part, but as that naturally signified the Homage and Acknowledgment of the Mind, and proceeded from it. This is evident for the same Reasons, without repeating them, which were offered in the Case of Adoration.

A *Third* Part of religious Worship is now, and ever was, more or less, *Prayer*, called in *Scripture* with an Allusion to the Preceding, *the Sacrifice of Prayer and Thanksgiving; the Calves of our Lips*. I say, more or less, because it is certain that Words were less used, as Sacrifices and Adorations were more practised. And the Reason is plain, because Sacrifices and Adorations were designed to signify whatever we express by Words. For by them Men signified their Dependance upon God, their Acknowledgment of his Government,  
their

SERM. their Thankfulness for Favours received,

VIII. their Sense of Sin, and Hopes of Mercy,  
that is, every Thing in general which Men speak in their Addresses to God; and consequently Words must be less necessary under such Circumstances.

Yet because we can express ourselves more explicitly by Words than by any Gestures or Actions, and because together with the suppliant Postures and Presents made to Princes, there was generally some Petition in Words, there were ever probably joined with their Sacrifices some Forms of Prayer to God Almighty, tho' short and few, if we may guess from the Nature of the Thing, and from what is yet remaining to us of the Practice of Antiquity. As the Sacrifices began to disappear, the Prayers began to lengthen, till at last the Former were wholly swallowed up in the Latter, and Prayers now constitute the main Part of Worship.

But as I observed before, by what way soever we express it, still it is the same Thing that we express, our Dependence upon Almighty God, his Being and Providence,

vidence, our own Humility and his Great-  
ness, our Wants and his Power and Good-  
ness, our Sins and his Mercy, and what-  
ever are the Consequences of such an Ac-  
knowledgment. And to that purpose, as  
we said before, that the most humble of  
Postures, the most valuable of Offerings  
were best becoming the divine Majesty,  
so here are proper the gravest and most  
solemn Words, the most expressive of our  
Humility and the Greatness of God; Words  
chosen out from all those Forms of speak-  
ing which we use to Persons of the high-  
est Rank in Matters of greatest Conse-  
quence, and where we are most serious  
and in earnest.

Yet here too, could we suppose Words  
to be purely the Motion of the Tongue  
and of the Lips, (and we can as easily  
conceive it as in the Case of Sacrifice and  
Prostration, perhaps more easily as it is  
something more commodious and cheaper  
to give Words to Almighty God, than  
those more laborious and costly Marks of  
Homage) could we, I say, suppose Prayer  
to proceed purely from the Lips and no  
deeper,

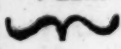
SERM.

VIII.



SERM. deeper, not that real Sense of Things  
 VIII. which the Words should naturally carry ;  
 such a Prayer would be *an Abomination*  
*to the Lord*, as much as those Sacrifices of  
 which the *Prophets* testify such an Ab-  
 horrence. Prayers are no otherwise valu-  
 able than as they are supported with that  
 internal Sense, and animated with *Spirit*  
*and Truth*.

A *Fourth* Part of Religious Worship  
 which I shall mention, are those *Hymns*  
 or *Psalms* sung in Honour of God to *Mu-*  
*sick Instrumental* or *Vocal*. These Hymns  
 are Words likewise, but modulated and  
 assisted by Harmony to give them greater  
 Force upon the Mind. Now the Musick  
 ought to be so contrived as to give a new  
 Life and Vigour to Devotion ; to make  
 Humility still more humble, the Majesty  
 of God still more awful and tremendous ;  
 when we are praising God, to lift and ele-  
 vate the Soul above itself, and give it those  
 Raptures which Words of themselves are  
 too feeble to excite ; to make the Exercise  
 of Religion a gentle, a noble, and even

a divine Employment; such as we chuse SERM.  
to represent, because we know nothing VIII.  
higher, the Worship of Angels and all   
those Hosts of Heaven who are for ever  
celebrating the Glories of God.

Here we must repeat the Observation  
we have made under every Part of Wor-  
ship, that Musick, no more than Words  
or Postures, or Offerings, was not origi-  
nally created for divine Worship only, tho'  
it has ever made a considerable Part of it:  
For it was used in celebrating the great  
Actions of Men living and dead, of Ge-  
nerals and Patriots, of Kings and Heroes,  
and God-like Men, Men far elevated be-  
yond the common Rank of Mortals, and  
who therefore required a Language raised  
beyond the common Speech, and dignified  
with all the Grace and Beauty which Har-  
mony of Sound could give it; and from  
thence it was applied to Religion and the  
Honour of God with all the Advantages  
that it received in every Age: And for  
the same Reasons that I have so often hint-  
ed, because it was thought no more than  
decent that God should have the Superi-  
ority

SERM. ority in every Thing that was great and  
 VIII. excellent, every Thing that could express  
 the Homage that was due to him from  
 Mankind.

And accordingly as soon as we hear of any Musick at all, we find it employed this way : In the more simple Times the Harmony must of Course be more simple, but still it was the best they had. In the Times of *Moses* we read of the Horns, the Trumpets, and the Timbrels used to this purpose ; but afterwards, when *David* had raised the Kingdom of *Israel* to a high Pitch of Grandeur, and he had in his own Palace the State of a great King, Musick of every Kind, as well Instruments as Voices ; (for he performed himself, and doubtless encouraged it in others) we hear immediately in those divine Hymns of his own Composition, of a vast Variety of Instruments, which he calls upon in the 150th *Psalms*, and others, to *praise the Lord* : And we know that he employed them to that purpose, and instituted a Number of Musicians, whose constant Business it was to attend the  
 Service

Service of the Altar. The Author of the *Books of Chronicles* is very exact in giving us a List of the several Bands. SERM.  
VIII.

Here indeed too we are obliged to acknowledge, that Musick considered as Part of the divine Worship, is only valuable as it enflames the Devotion of the Soul; and consequently where it is performed with no Effect at all upon the Mind, there it is intirely useless and insignificant, as insignificant as Adoration, Sacrifice, or Prayer, where there is no *Spirit* or *Truth* in them.

Another Part of Worship, or rather an Appendage or Concomitant of it, is the *Place* where it is perform'd: The *Sanctuary*, or *Temple*, or *Church* where Almighty God is thus honoured, and where he is understood as particularly resident. This is something akin to the second Part of Worship mention'd before, where we explained Sacrifice to be an Offering or Present of every Thing that is good and valuable to God: For as divine Worship must be performed somewhere, in some

Q Place

SERM. Place proper for it; a Temple is nothing  
VIII. but a House offered or consecrated to God  
for that End.

From the Time of Consecration therefore a Temple is the House of God, as much his Right and Property as a Palace is a King's House, or as any private House from the Time of Purchase belongs to its respective Owner. For as there is always a certain Form of Words or Ceremonies, whereby a civil Right is conveyed, so Consecration is nothing else but such a Form, whereby a Thing or Structure of any Kind is made over to God for the Purpose of his Worship: From which Time it becomes as unjust, unlawful, or whatever stronger Word you can make use of, to employ it to any other use, as it would be for a Stranger, with no Right at all, forcibly to intrude into my Property, and convert it to his own Advantage: The Injustice is the same, but still more audacious in Proportion to the Dignity of the Person so insulted, and by being employed against God grows into Impiety and Sacrilege. And from  
hence



hence by the way, we may see the Child-  
ishness and Poverty, as well as the Impu-  
dence of that Drollery, but too fashion-  
able, which delights to elude the Force  
of all sacred Things, and would make  
Consecration ridiculous, by representing it  
as I know not what Kind of Charm or  
Conjuration; whereas it is a Thing as in-  
telligible as any other Form or Ceremony  
used in civil Matters, and stands exactly  
so proportioned to God and Religion as  
any civil Conveyance to Government and  
the Publick.

SERM.  
VIII.

But to return to my Subject: Here too  
as before it is just to remark, that in those  
sacred Houses or Places of divine Worship,  
God Almighty had always the Pre-emi-  
nence: Things were proportioned here as  
in Adoration, Sacrifices, Prayers, Hymns,  
that is, the Temples were grander and  
more august than ordinary Houses; and  
proceeding from the same Principle, as  
being suited to that greater Reverence  
which was paid to the Deity. Temples  
are not Edifices of a particular Kind by  
themselves; for God Almighty no more

Q 2

requires

SERM. requires that, than that a new set of Words  
VIII. or Postures should be invented on purpose  
w for him, but only to have the Pre-eminence in all those Ways and Instances whereby Men usually express their Respect: And accordingly they are no other than Houses accommodated to the Purposes of Worship, as others are contrived for the Convenience of Men, but with more Magnificence and Beauty.

If there were ever a Time when Men, according to the Descriptions of Poets, lived in Caves, it is probable that Things would have proportioned themselves to those Circumstances of Mankind, and God would have had the fairest and the largest Cave. This at least we know, that when the Children of *Israel* were travelling thro' the Wilderness, and pitched in Tents, he had the richest Tent, and was undoubtedly as well satisfied with it, as he was afterwards with that most glorious Structure which *Solomon* built for him: For he never expects more than the Proportion of Respect which is his due, and that it be expressed in the most natural and accustomed

accustomed Way. But afterwards, when *David* was become a great King, and settled in a fine Palace, it seemed absurd and ill-proportioned to him, as he expressed himself to the *Prophet Nathan*, that he should dwell in an House of Cedar, and the Ark of the Covenant of the Lord should still remain under Curtains: And God Almighty, tho' for other Reasons he did not permit him to build the Temple himself, yet very well approved his Intention of doing it, as we learn from 1 Kings viii. *whereas it was in thine Heart to build an House unto my Name, thou didst well that it was in thine Heart; nevertheless thou shalt not build the House, but thy Son, &c.*

It was in this House of his that God was understood to be present, as much as a Prince in his Court, there to receive the Prayers, the Homages, and Adorations of his People, which were there consequently to be offered. The Effect of this was ordinarily to inspire an Awe and Reverence into Men, when they approached this Holy Place. But if notwithstanding all this, they could be there without

SERM. any Sense of the divine Presence, or being  
 VIII. in any respect prepared by a due Compo-  
 { sure of Mind for the sacred Offices of Re-  
 ligion there to be celebrated, why then  
 indeed they might as well be performed  
 in any other Place; the Temple of God  
 was prophaned and become of no Signi-  
 fication.

And what I have said of the Temple  
 you may easily apply to the Furniture and  
 Utensils of the Temple, so much as was  
 necessary to the Services of Religion to be  
 performed in it, that they too were suited  
 and proportioned, and ought to be so, to  
 the Temple.

*Lastly*, I shall mention as necessary to  
 the divine Worship, the *Priests*. As every  
 House has its Servants, and every Court  
 its Officers to serve in the several Employ-  
 ments that belong to them, so had God  
 likewise in his Temple his Servants and  
 Ministers to wait at the Altar, and exe-  
 cute all the Parts of Worship.

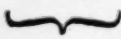
These Ministers from the Time they  
 are consecrated to God, are his Servants  
 to



to perform divine Worship, which there-  
fore it belongs to them only to perform; SERM. VIII.  
and it would be full as absurd, as con-  
trary to Right for any Man not properly  
called to intrude into their Functions, as  
for any private Person to pretend to exe-  
cute an Office at Court without a War-  
rant, or to assume the Authority of a Judge  
or Justice of the Peace without a Com-  
mission: One is as much an Insult and  
Indignity against God and Religion, as the  
other against the King and the Laws: One  
is Impiety as the other is Injustice. For  
they are proportioned exactly alike; only  
where the Mind is more awed with the  
Idea of God than of Man, Impiety will  
be in the same Measure more abhorred.

These Priests then by the very Nature  
of their Institution, are in the Temple to  
pronounce the Prayers, and to perform all  
other Offices of Religion. And as they  
are the Servants of God in his Temple, so  
they are to be maintained and habited,  
and treated in all respects in a Manner be-  
coming their Master and the honourable  
Service in which they are employed.



SERM. And the natural Consequence of this  
VIII.  should be, that where the Offices of Religion are performed, and the Prayers pronounced in a solemn Manner by Persons invested with Authority for that purpose, there the Mind will ordinarily be more strongly affected, it will feel a Weight from that Authority with which every Thing comes accompanied. But however where it is not so, where notwithstanding all these Advantages of Authority, &c. the Mind of any Person is absolutely idle and inattentive, to such a Person, a Prayer, or any other Office of Religion, otherwise ever so well circumstanced with Authority and the like, can be of no Service, and God can no more accept his seeming Attendance on the Minister, than if he attended on any other Person, or did not attend at all.

In all this Discourse I have not mentioned *Preaching*, because tho' it be an excellent Institution, and of vast Use, practised in the antient *Jewish* Synagogues and all *Christian* Churches, and which seems to be substituted to those oracular Answers

swers which were heretofore delivered by SERM.  
the Priest from God to the People ; yet it VIII.  
is not a Part of divine Worship properly  
so called, but only added to it for the Be-  
nefit and Instruction of the People, when  
they are assembled to worship God.

And thus having gone thro' all the ma-  
terial Parts of divine Worship, and shewed  
that they are all no other than natural  
Indications of that internal Honour and  
Reverence which Mankind have ever paid  
to the Deity, I have laid a proper Ground  
for the

*Second Part* of this Discourse, in which  
I am to shew that the Worship of God  
ought still, and for ever, to be performed  
in all its Parts with a becoming Graceful-  
ness and Dignity : A Beauty and Decorum  
in the external Face of Religion is still as  
necessary as ever.

And indeed this appears so plain in  
general from the Nature of Worship itself,  
as it has been explained under the first  
Head, that I doubt not but I have been  
anticipated in a great deal of what I am  
now

SERM. now to say, by your own natural Conclu-  
 VIII. sions. For if we must really honour and  
 reverence God in our Hearts, and Kneel-  
 ing for Instance be the natural and usual  
 Posture by which that Reverence is ex-  
 pressed, what is at first sight more reason-  
 able than that we should express it that  
 way? If our Bodies as well as our Souls  
 are the Creature and Workmanship of  
 God, why is not he intitled to the Ho-  
 mage of the Body as well as of the Mind?  
 Why should not we *bow down and kneel*  
*before the Lord our Maker?* Our Fortunes  
 and Possessions of any Kind, if they are  
 the Gifts of God, what can be a more  
 reasonable Acknowledgment, than some  
 small Part of them offered to his Honour,  
 or as it is expressed *Prov. iii. that we Ho-*  
*nour the Lord with our Substance?* If we  
 really believe the divine Superintendence  
 and Government of the World, why should  
 not we *confess it with the Mouth as well as*  
*believe it in the Heart,* that is, why should  
 not we express the Sense of our Minds  
 in the Prayers and Praises of the Church?  
 And where and by whom so properly as  
 in

in those sacred Edifices raised for that SERM.  
purpose, and by those Persons who are VIII.  
appropriated to the divine Service? These  
are Conclusions, I say, arising so obviously  
from the plain Nature of the divine Wor-  
ship as we have been describing it, that  
they cannot fail of offering themselves to  
the Mind of every Hearer. But because  
it may be expected that something more  
explicit should be said upon this Subject,  
give me leave to offer these two Reasons  
for external Decency and Solemnity in the  
Worship of God. I say then

*First*, That where there is that real  
Honour and Reverence for God in the  
Mind which we ought to have, it will  
naturally, if it be not kept in by Violence  
and Restraint, make some Efforts upon  
the Body, and express itself by some  
external Marks and Indications of Ho-  
nour. And

*Secondly*, That the Body acts backward  
upon the Mind, and those external Signi-  
fications of Reverence naturally tend to  
create and cherish an internal Reverence  
of Heart and Soul.

I say

SERM. I say first, that where there is a real  
VIII. Honour and Reverence for God in the  
Mind, it will naturally, if it be not kept  
in by Violence, make some Efforts upon  
the Body, and express itself in some external Marks and Indications of Honour. And if this be so, as it confirms the plain Account given before, why it always has in fact operated in that Manner, so it is an eternal Reason why it should do so. For I suppose that as we are still compounded of Body and Mind as much as ever, so there is still the same Communication from one to the other, the same reciprocal Action and Re-action between them as ever.

The first Foundation of Worship is in the Soul; there must be a true Sense of a Deity, of all the divine Glories and Excellencies, and of our Dependence upon Him for all that we are and have; there must be this, I say, in the Mind: This is ever to be supposed as the Ground of all, without which the most solemn Words or Sounds, the most humble Gestures or Motions, the most august Structures and Cere-



Ceremonies, are, and can be, nothing at SERM.  
all : So far I take for granted on all Sides. VIII.

This true Sense of Deity then once supposed, the next Question is, whether it shall be intirely confined to the Mind, or suffered to exert itself upon the Body and its Actions in some manner or other which is most natural to it.

The first has been half-said, or rather seems to have been said, for it has always been with some Faintness and Inconsistency, by some among ourselves, but has never been strongly and in plain Terms asserted, except perhaps by some very few *Quietists*. There have been those among ourselves who have talked much against Shew, and Form, and Ceremony, and external Devotion, but at the same Time have not considered they practised it themselves in some manner or other, at least so far as Words go. They all express themselves in Words at least. But what are Words more than Gestures, or any other Significations of the Mind? Only that they are somewhat easier and cheaper : Surely they are not the Prayer  
itself ;

SERM. itself; they are not the mental and inward  
 VIII. Reverence; they are designed to express  
 ~~~~~ the Thoughts, but they are not the very  
 Thoughts themselves; they may proceed
 only from the Lips; they are full as ca-
 pable of being falsified as any other Part
 of external Devotion.

No others therefore can with a good
 Grace declaim against Form in general
 Terms but the *Quietists*, if there were
 ever any truly such, (for I make some
 doubt of it) these indeed are said to have
 been consistent enough in their Opinions,
 and to have absolutely renounced all ex-
 ternal Appearances whatever. Devotion
 with them was nothing but a profound
Quiet and Tranquillity of Mind; a serene
 Contemplation of God perfectly undisturb-
 ed by Words or Gestures. These were
 probably good People, and had the Inte-
 rests of Piety at Heart, but unhappily had
 been led to fix their Eyes too much upon
 the Hypocrisy concealed under external
 Forms, (which Hypocrisy will be always
 great where Superstition, as at *Rome*, is
 carried to great Excesses) and therefore
 proposed

proposed to remedy one Evil by another SERM.
 still greater, to remove Superstition and VIII.
 Hypocrisy by introducing downright A-
 theism. For that would soon have been
 the Consequence. If Religion be violently
 pent back in the Mind, and restrained
 from exerting those Effects which natu-
 rally grow from it, such a Restraint will
 operate backward upon the Cause itself,
 create a damp upon the internal Principle,
 and by Degrees quite extinguish it. And
 if it were once become general not to
 name God, it would be full as general not
 to think of Him. And accordingly there
 is Reason to fear that we have many of
 this Kind of *Quietists* among us, I mean
 those who from a general and almost uni-
 versal neglect of Religion, of all those
 Forms of Worship by which the Notion
 of God is fed and kept alive amongst Men,
live intirely without God in the World, and
have him not in all their Thoughts.

But perfect *Quietism* is a Thing so con-
 trary to human Nature, that as I observed
 before, it may well be doubted whether
 there be any such Thing: Whatever Vio-
 lence

SERM. lence we use, the Mind will in spite of
 VIII. us shew itself some how or other in the
 Actions ; and if Religion has once seated
 itself in the Heart, it will of Necessity
 conform the outward Behaviour in some
 respect to it.

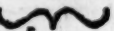
It remains next then to consider, since
 the Reverence of the Mind must discover
 itself by something external, what Kind
 of external Expressions it must and should
 make use of : Whether those which it
 familiarly falls into by the common Usage
 of Mankind, to which it is naturalized by
 Custom, and which from thence have ac-
 quired a Force and Signification ; or whe-
 ther they should be widely different or
 quite contrary : That is, whether in our
 Devotions we should use a Language the
 same that we use in the Affairs of Life,
 the Terms of which are perfectly under-
 stood by us, and enter naturally into the
 Mind with the Significations annexed to
 them ; or whether we should use a quite
 different Language, or the same Words
 with the Meaning quite inverted : Whe-
 ther to express our Reverence to God we
 should

should kneel or stand, which are the common Postures of Respect, and are therefore directed by our Church; or sit or lie down in the Postures of Neglect and Indolence: Whether when the Soul is elevated with the Idéa of the divine Perfections, it should signify that Elevation in a confused irregular Harshness and Noise of jarring Sounds; or in a graceful and harmonious Composition of Notes, assisted by whatever is most noble and solemn in Musick: In a Word, whether the whole divine Service, with regard to the Structure itself, the Ornaments, and every Thing that appertains to it, should be performed in the Beauty of Holiness, with a becoming Dignity, and we should treat our God as we would treat our Prince; or whether any Thing however poor and naked, however gloomy and slovenly, be sufficient, be proper to express the Sense we have of the divine Majesty.

It is plain then (for there needs no Argument to enforce it: the bare laying the Thing before you makes it obvious to

R

com-

SERM.
VIII.


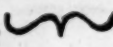
SERM. common Sense) it is plain, I say, that
VIII. where there is a real Reverence for God,
that Reverence will and ought to express
itself, and in all those Ways by which it
is usually expressed amongst Men, except
it be restrained by Violence. I make this
Exception in favour to some who have
from Principle argued themselves into an
Indifference for all external Worship; they
may possibly go a great Way in dividing
the Body from the Mind, and by much
straining keep the Mind on one Thing,
while the outward Action speaks another.
But ordinarily it is not so. When I see
a Man sitting or lolling in a Posture de-
voted to Laziness and Indolence, at a Time
when the most solemn Part of our Prayers
is pronouncing, will such a Man, I say,
ordinarily persuade me that he is then
with all Humility of Soul adoring the di-
vine Majesty, that he has a true Sense of
his Sins, his Dependence? It is not, it
cannot be, and I appeal for the Truth of
it to every Man's own Breast. Again, if
there be a Person who has very good No-
tions

tions of Elegance and Order in his own SERM.
House, who knows how to treat a great VIII.
Friend with the utmost Splendor and Po-
liteness, is offended at any Indecency and
the like; if the same Person thinks any
Thing good enough for the Worship of
God, however coarse or naked or unor-
namented, has any one Reason to believe
(I still beg Allowance for the Exception
abovemade) that he has a true publick
Spirit to promote the Honour of God or
Religion? That he has the same Fear or
Respect for God as for a Great Man; the
same Love for God as for Himself? For
if it were so, would not the same Zeal,
the same Passions, operate the same Way?

No, perhaps it may be objected, we
have all imaginable Honour for God, but
we are satisfied that he has no Occasion
for any of those fine Things; he expects
no Gifts from us; they cannot reach him;
Heaven and Earth, and every Thing with-
in them are his own Property, and he
may dispose of them at his Pleasure: How
then can he be the better for any poor

SERM. Oblations which we are capable of making him? This is true, and is a Consideration proper sometimes to be urged against the Vanity of those silly Men who would fancy themselves to be profitable to their Maker. But if we must never shew our Respect but in such Instances where we may be profitable to him, what is there left for us at all to do? Is he any more the better for our Prayers or our Praises than our Offerings, nay the very Worship of the Soul itself, does it bring him any Advantage? *If we be Righteous, what do we give him, or what does he receive at our Hands?* According to the Expression of *Elibu*, *Job xxxv.* must we therefore have neither Piety nor Virtue, because we can add nothing to Almighty God by them?

This Objection, as plausible as it has appeared to the antient *Epicureans*, and some smart Men among the Moderns, was ever known and despised by wise Men. Thus *Solomon* in that excellent Prayer of his at the Dedication of the Temple, after

ter all the Labour and Expence he had SERM.
been at in Building, was very sensible that VIII.
the Heaven and the Heaven of Heavens 
could *not contain* God, *much less the House*
which he had *built*, 1 Kings viii. this great
King, I say, knew this very well, but at
the same Time he knew something more,
that tho' his Temple, magnificent as it
was, bore no Proportion to the Deity, nor
could give to him any real Advantage, yet
it was of the highest Advantage to Men
that God should be thus honoured, be-
cause it was a natural Signification of that
internal Reverence which can never be
dispensed with, and without which we
can never be happy, never be Objects of
the divine Blessing.

It is somewhat here as in the Case of
Kings and Great Men. A Palace is not
so properly an Habitation for the Person
of the King, for his Person is but about
the Size of other Men, and would require
no larger an Accommodation; but it is
built, according to the Expression of *Ne-*

SERM. *buchadnezzar, Daniel iv. to be a House*
 VIII. *for his Royalty and for the Honour of his*
Majesty : That is, it must be proportion-
 ed not to his Person, but to that Rank
 and State which he bears among Men ;
 And I know no better or more justifiable
 Reason for that Grandeur and Abundance
 in every part of Life in which the Great
 indulge themselves, and with which their
 Inferiors Complement them in their En-
 tertainments : They must maintain not
 so properly themselves, for small would
 be the Allowance necessary to their own
 Persons, but the Honour of the Post in
 which God has placed them. So in Re-
 ligion we ought not to consider and pro-
 vide for what is barely necessary, if I
 may speak so, to God, without which his
 Worship cannot subsist, bare Walls and a
 Roof ; but it ought to be suited to his
 Majesty among Men, and to the Impor-
 tance of his Government in the World.

I would not be supposed to mean that
 God will accept no Worship but what is
 pompous

pompous and costly : I have sufficiently explained myself on that Head before, where I said that God requires nothing but Proportion. That is the eternal Rule by which every Thing in Religion ought to be guided. Where Men are hearty only and sincere in their Design to honour God, he accepts them according to what they have, and not according to what they have not. The *two Mites* of the *Widow* are as acceptable as the richest Offerings of the Great. Should Religion, as in the Times of primitive *Christianity*, lie under Oppression ; should its Professors be Poor, or otherwise unable ; the Worship of God performed in the Fields under the open Air, or in the most despicable Building that we can conceive, would be as grateful to God, as the most solemn Prayers pronounced in the most magnificent Temple.

Agreeable to this was the Oracle, said to be delivered with regard to the *Lacedæmonians*, “ that the Gods were better pleased with their coarse Services, than with

SERM. "the richest Offerings of some other
VIII. "*Greeks.*" But then this must be taken
along with it, that as they offered these to
the Gods, so they had no better for them-
selves : There was still the same Propor-
tion. Had they had Notions of Elegance
and Riches in their own private Furni-
ture, and put off the Gods with the mean-
est and vilest of their Utensils, the Case
would have been quite altered. For such
an Inequality could not have consisted
with honourable Notions of the Deity.

And I don't know, whether among
other Reasons, the Neglect of this Pro-
portion be not one, that Religion does not
appear in general among the Great, and
those who would affect their Airs, that
graceful and genteel Thing which it has
done. There has been a Time when a
Gentleman would say he had been at
Prayers without blushing, or being thought
to have done any Thing but what was
becoming a Man of the highest Rank for
Birth and good Sense : Whereas now it is
but too commonly seen — the quite
con-

contrary. And I don't know, I say, whether it may not be owing in some Measure to those sordid Notions of Religion which some People entertain. For is it not natural enough for a Man that sees every Thing at home elegant and splendid, and at Church nothing but Poverty and Baldness; that has good Musick whenever he chuses to hear it out of Church, and in Church hears the Praises of God sung as we have often heard; is it not natural enough for such a one, I say, to despise a Worship which has so contemptible an Appearance? And is it not in Fact a Subject for Drollery and Ridicule? Is it not monstrously indecent and disproportioned, that a trifling Song shall be conducted to the Mind upon the Wings of a thousand pretty Graces, when at the same Time the Musick of the Church, instead of ennobling the divine Praises, shall dishonour them and make them ridiculous? For the Question now is not whether we shall have any Musick, for that is agreed by all those at least who Sing the Psalms in
any

SERM. any Manner ; but whether it shall be such
VIII. as will answer its End, such as will honour and elevate Devotion, or damp and disgrace it.

I am not in all this talking for Foppery and Flutter neither. I would have Beauty, but the Beauty of Holiness, that is, a Beauty corrected by Simplicity, and tempered by the Gravity and Solemnity of Religion. I am sensible that Religion may be overloaded with Ornament, that the true Substance and Spirit of it may be buried under an Inundation of Pomp when it is carried to Excess. This was Part of the Corruption of Popery, which needed a Reformation as much as any other, when all the true Worship of the Heart was evaporated into Form and Pageantry. But still there is a wide Chasm between all Ornaments and none at all ; and if it were allowed to argue against a good Thing from the Excess of it (which indeed is the common Way) nothing would ever be done that ought to be done.

It is true that every the least Step made towards a Beauty and Gracefulness in the
Worship

Worship of God, may, if you please, be SERM.
considered as a Step towards Superstition; VIII.
but notwithstanding that, as long as we
are on this Side the Medium, every approach we make towards it is right. Otherwise we must be afraid to be generous or frugal for fear of Prodigality or Covetousness; for every act of one and the other is a Step towards these Extremes. And I dare say, we may safely leave it to this Issue. If from a general View of all the Religions in the civilized World, all that ever were or now are, we really believe that we are beyond the middle Point of Decency, and leaning towards Foppery and Superstition; if this be the Case, I say, we shall do right to make a resolute Stand where we are, and not advance a Step further. But if on the other Hand we are yet on this Side, and vastly too, why then it must be right and very right to encourage every Thing which shall add some Honour and Dignity to the Worship of God. For till then it will but shew
that

SERM. that there is a becoming Reverence of
VIII. God in the Mind. But I had almost forgot that I mentioned a

*Second Thing, Which was, that the Body acts backward upon the Mind, and that these external Significations of Reverence naturally tend to create and cherish an internal Reverence of Heart and Soul. Here I shall use but very few Words : For besides that I have not been able in the preceding Discourse to refrain mixing these two Considerations together, the Thing is plain of itself at first Sight ; so plain that I dare say were any indifferent Person obliged to be present at the several Offices of Religion, where they were celebrated with that Dignity that belongs to them, where the Majesty of the Place, the Solemnity of the Pronunciation, the Humility of the Posture conspired to join all their Force, it would be very difficult for a Man thus situated to refuse to God the Homage of the Mind :
Where*

Where the Hymns or Psalms were assisted with the Solemnity of Church-Musick, the Soul could hardly fail of being elevated. Or if a Man could withstand all these, (for with Difficulty some perhaps might) how much more easily, where the several Offices were intirely naked and unassisted with any of these Circumstances?

By this Time I believe there can be no Occasion to take particular Notice of the Objection arising from our *Saviour's* Expression, that *God must be worshipped in Spirit and in Truth*, since I have been all along pleading for an external Beauty and Decency upon no other Foundation, but because it was impossible that a *Worship in Spirit and in Truth*, can upon the Whole, subsist without it: It necessarily arises from it; it necessarily cherishes it. For otherwise where they are divided, an external Shew without any Substance or Truth, (which is the Case where Things are run into a vast Excess of Superstitious

SERM. perstitious Pageantry) it cannot possibly
VIII. be, and I have all along said that it can-
not be of any Weight or Estimation be-
fore God.

*To this God, Father Son and Holy
Ghost, be given all Glory now and
ever ! Amen.*





S E R M O N IX.

On HUMILITY.

LUKE xviii. 14.

I tell you, this Man went down to his House justified rather than the other. For every one that exalteth himself shall be abased; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted.



ESUS, it is said, taking Notice of some who trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and despised others, spoke to them a Parable which was designed to discountenance Pride and encourage Humility.

SERM.
IX.

SERM. mility. This Parable is finely wrought,

IX. and has a good many Things worth our
 Notice. *Two Men went up into the Temple to pray ; the One a Pharisee, the Other a Publican. The Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself ; God, I thank thee that I am not as other Men are, Extortioners, Unjust, Adulterers, or even as this Publican. I fast twice in the Week, I give Tithes of all that I possess. And the Publican standing afar off, would not lift up so much as his Eyes unto Heaven, but smote upon his Breast, saying, God be merciful unto me a Sinner. After which comes our Saviour's Decision upon the Conduct of these two Men : I tell you, this Man, that is, the Publican went down to his House justified rather than the Other. For every one that exalteth himself shall be abased, and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted.*

The *Pharisees*, we know, were the strictest Sect of the *Jews* ; the most scrupulous in the Observation of the whole *Law*, even to the minutest Points of it.

Under

Under this Covert indeed we are informed SERM.
 by our blessed *Saviour* in many Parts of IX.
 the *Gospel*, that they took Liberties frequently to act contrary to the greatest and
 most essential Duties of Justice and Mercy. But this we are not to suppose of the *Pha-*
risee introduced into this Parable; we must allow him to be sincere when he
 talks of his Virtues, that he was no Ex-
 tortioner, Adulterer, or unjust Person; for
 otherwise the Design of the Parable is
 destroyed. We must allow him therefore,
 I say, to possess the moral Virtues which
 he boasts of, as well as to be exact in
 the several Duties of Religion. And on
 the other Hand we must suppose the *Pub-*
lican to be what he acknowledges him-
 self, a *Sinner*, one that had given himself
 a greater Loose in Points of Morality,
 and had been more negligent of his Duty
 to God than the *Pharisee* had. And yet
I tell you, says our *Saviour*, *that this Man*
went down to his House justified rather than
the other. This *Publican*, with all his
 Faults humbly acknowledged, was better
 accepted with God than the *Pharisee* with

SERM. all his Virtues so proudly displayed: For
 IX. *every one that exalteth himself shall be
 abased, and he that humbleth himself shall
 be exalted.*

This is a Sentence which our blessed Saviour seems to delight in, for he makes use of it upon many Occasions: But I chuse to take it from the Parable of the *Publican* and *Pharisee*, because it will better answer my Intention in the particular Manner in which I propose to treat this Subject. For without considering the Evils of Pride in general, or the general Advantage of Humility, I shall now confine myself to that particular Kind of Pride, which is apt to rise in a Man upon a View of his own Virtues, and that Humility which is inspired by a Sense of a Man's own Imperfections: And inquire whence it comes to pass, that *Jesus Christ* so expressly and definitively gives the Preference to the Latter. *I tell you, (says he) I pronounce, that this Man went down to his House justified rather than the Other.*

On Humility.

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It was much with the same View he SERM.
had told the *Pharisees*, that the *Publicans* IX.
and *Harlots* should go into the Kingdom of
God before Them; and that he every
where expresses so much Detestation of
that *Pharisaical* Self-conceit; and is for
ever recommending Meekness, Lowliness
of Mind; Poverty of Spirit; which are but
other Words for Humility, and a just Sense
of our own Imperfections.

It must be acknowledged that the
Schemes of Religion and Morality stand
upon quite different Foundations; and *Je-*
sus Christ and his *Apostles* argue from other
Principles than moral Writers. These
Latter are always magnifying the Virtues
of Man; the Self-Satisfaction and secret
Pride which the Mind feels in the Pos-
session of them: On the other Hand, the
Scriptures of the *new Testament* especially;
hardly ever mention the Name of Virtues;
consider them all as the Gifts of God, and
consequently endeavour to destroy all high
Imaginations of ourselves; that Self-Satis-
faction and Complacency which we are
apt to receive from the Contemplation of

SERM. our Virtues ; are for ever inculcating upon
 IX. us our Sins and Imperfections, and of
 course Humility, Repentance, a Trust and
 Acquiescence not in ourselves and our
 own Virtues, but in the Mercies of God
 and Merits of *Jesus Christ*.

These different Schemes do indeed want
 some explaining ; and this Parable of our
Saviour will give us an Opportunity of
 doing it, in considering the Characters of
 the *Pharisee* and of the *Publican*, and the
 Judgment which our *Saviour* has given
 in Favour of the Latter.

First then as to the *Pharisee*, he is
 described as going up into the Temple,
 there standing by himself apart from the
 poor *Publican*, as renouncing all Commu-
 nication with him, a Man whom he
 would neither eat, drink, nor pray with ;
 and with a Face erect, and an Air full of
 that presumptuous Confidence which the
 Notion of high Merit naturally inspires,
 thus to have addressed himself to God :
*God, I thank thee, that I am not as other
 Men are, Extortioners, Unjust, Adulterers,*

or

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or even as this Publican : I fast twice in a Week, I give Tithes of all that I possess. SERM. IX.

Now here, as I said before, we must suppose this *Pharisee* to possess the Virtues which he thus details before God : Virtues which many Men wanted, and some of them probably this very *Publican* above whom he values himself. For otherwise, if we could suppose all this to be rank Hypocrisy ; that he professed himself before God to be destitute of those Vices which he really practised, and to perform those Duties of Religion which in Truth he neglected ; this would have been such gross Impiety as to have left no Room for any Comparison between the two Persons here introduced. Faults honestly and with a due Sense of them acknowledged, must in every one's Judgment be infinitely preferable to the same Faults where they are disguised under a Profession of the contrary Virtues, and especially when that Profession is solemnly made before God.

We are ready to allow farther, that those Virtues and Duties here mentioned, are intended to signify all others enjoined

SERM. by the *Law* of *Moses*; for otherwise, tho'
 IX. he had been no Adulterer or Extortioner,
 yet if he had been guilty of Perjury or
 Murder; if he had fasted and paid Tithes,
 and at the same Time neglected Circum-
 cision or the Passover: This too would
 have been as bad, and left the Parable
 intirely uselefs and insignificant. We
 must grant this *Pharisee* therefore to be,
 what *St. Paul* professed himself to have
 been, with regard to the *Law* blamelefs,
 to have wilfully omitted none of its Pre-
 cepts or Duties, and consequently in fact
 to have been guilty of no gross Immo-
 ralities or Neglects.

Together with all these Allowances in
 Favour of the *Pharisee*, we are obliged to
 suppose further, that he thanked God for
 these Advantages which he enjoyed be-
 yond others: *God, I thank thee that I am*
not as other Men are, &c. This carries the
 Matter higher, as it supposes him sensible
 of our Dependence upon God for what
 we are, and making his Acknowledgment
 of this Dependence in such Manner as to
 give

give God the Glory of those Virtues which he enjoyed. SERM,
IX.

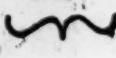
With all this it may seem difficult to conceive wherein the *Pharisee* was to blame, or how he deserved in our *Saviour's* Judgment to be placed beneath the *Publican*, a Man confessedly guilty of many notorious Breaches of the *Law*. For if I am really no Adulterer or Extortioner, while many others are; if I am really just in paying my Dues to God and Man, which many others neglect to pay, why may not I be indulged in this Pleasure and Satisfaction of Mind which arises from a Consciousness of having done well? This Pride of Virtue, if it must be called so? This is the Point which we are now to clear.

And here it must be acknowledged, that Virtue and Perfection have a Right to that Self-applause which naturally arises from them: And I add, every Step and Degree towards Perfection is intitled to a certain Share of that Self-applause, of which we cannot deprive it without wronging it and prejudicing its Interests. Had this Boast

SERM. of the *Pharisee* therefore been put into the

IX. Mouth of *Adam* in his Integrity, of Man
 in a State of Perfection, invested with all
 the Powers and Glories of Virtue; had He
 from a Contemplation of the Excellencies
 of his Nature, compared with those Cor-
 ruptions of the human Nature which he
 might possibly conceive, felt a secret Com-
 placency in the Comparison, and blessed
 God for such a Superiority; this had been
 right; for it would have been true.

Even in that State indeed there would
 still have been a Humility becoming it;
 a Humility by which we acknowledged
 the infinite Distance between the Perfec-
 tions of the divine Nature, and those
 which were given to Man; by which we
 acknowledged that we were the Works of
 God's Hand, and wholly indebted to his
 Goodness who had created all those Ex-
 cellencies we enjoyed. But a Humility
 by which we acknowledged our own Cor-
 ruption and Incapacity of Happiness, and
 the Necessity we had of the Grace of God
 to remedy this Corruption, and restore us
 to a Capacity of Happiness which we ne-
 cessarily

cessarily forfeited with our Innocence; SERM.
Such a Humility as this is, I say, would IX.
in that State have been wholly improper, 
as being built upon Falshood, and a Sup-
position of Corruption which yet was
not.

The meaning of Humility is, not to conceive ourselves what we are not, or below what we are, but to conceive ourselves just in the Station where we are placed; in a State of Perfection to conceive ourselves still infinitely beneath God, and in a State of Corruption to conceive ourselves in a State of Corruption, and consequently short of that Perfection which belongs to Man, and just so far short of the Happiness which belongs to him. So that if, we suppose a State of Corruption, there will be belonging to us a Humility superadded to that which was before. We shall still be obliged to acknowledge ourselves infinitely beneath God, have the same Obligations to him as to our Creator. And over and above that, we must acknowledge ourselves some how fallen or departed from the Perfection and Happiness which should primarily

SERM. primarily belong to the human Nature;
 IX. and must be obliged to God further for
 a Goodness extraordinary, a *Grace* as it is
 called in the *Scripture*-Language, for correcting this Depravity, supplying our Deficiency, and restoring us to our lost Capacity of Perfection and Happiness.

Here then consisted the Fault of the *Pharisee*, in arrogating to himself a Perfection, and thereupon assuming a Pride which does not belong to us in this State of Imperfection. God Almighty is still to be thanked as our Creator, but now we must of Necessity add to his Goodness in creating us, his Grace in redeeming us, and thank him under both these Notions. Virtue, true perfect Virtue has still all its Rights and Prerogatives, has of course a Self-Satisfaction and Applause accompanying it; but as we have Virtue but imperfect, this Satisfaction and Applause must be likewise imperfect in Proportion, must be checked and moderated by a Sense of our Imperfection, which ought to be for ever joined with it. And this is that Modesty and Humility which is adapted
 to

to the Present corrupted State of Mankind, SERM.
and as much belongs to it, as a Self-Satisf- IX.
faction does to a State of Innocence.

So far I think the Matter will bear no Dispute. The only Question is, whether there be that universal Corruption in the human Nature which Religion supposes, and upon which the whole Structure of it is built. If there be, then *Christianity*, and every Doctrine of it will flow along easily and in good Order: Otherwise indeed the *Pharisee* might be right, and *Jesus Christ* wrong in requiring from him a Humility to which he was not obliged. It will be sufficient at present to hint a Reason or two which I have mentioned upon another Occasion, to convince us of a Truth so evident as this is.

The *Pharisee*, according to the Expression of the *Evangelist*, *trusted in himself that he was righteous*: He was no Extortioner, unjust Person, or Adulterer: He fasted, and paid Tithes: And so far indeed he was righteous: For these external Duties of Morality and Religion are a necessary Part of Righteousness: This was the
Righteousness

SERM. *Righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees.*

IX. But there is a Notion of Righteousness infinitely exceeding this Righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees, a Righteousness measured by the Standard of human Nature in Perfection, and that original Law of God which comprehends all Right within it; whereas the other means no more than a Conformity to the *Law* of *Moses*, a set of external Virtues and Duties.

He had not proceeded to the gross Acts of Immorality, but had not he indulged covetous or wanton Desires? Was it not the Punishment of the *Law*, the Fear of Infamy, his Credit among the People, or some other such Side-Considerations, more than the pure View of Right and Equity, that restrained him? He had not robbed or stolen flagrantly, and within the Hold of the *Law*, but had he not oppressed or over-reached in any of these, Ten thousand Ways to which no human Laws can extend? Had he been as tender of his Neighbour's Honour as his Fortune? Or might not he allow himself to deal in Scandal and Detraction, and even think himself

himself the better Man for it? Did not **SERM.**
he hate, envy, malign in his Heart? **IX.**

Was not he given to be proud and conceited of himself, and to despise the rest of the World, particularly this poor *Publican*, who yet in our *Saviour's* Judgment was the worthier Man?

Could he, (I appeal to your own Opinion) or can any Man in the World answer with a clear Heart to all these Interrogatories, and many other such that might be put to him? If not, would it not have become him to have added to his Thanks to God for preserving him from the grosser Acts of Injustice, the Petition of the *Publican*, *God be merciful to me a Sinner*? Ought he not to have joined to the Humility of Man, the Humility of a corrupted, imperfect and sinful Man?

It is impossible that any Man can have taken a Survey of himself, but he must be sensible of an infinite Number of Imperfections, which spoil the Merit, the perfect Merit of his best Actions. *Cato*, who is talked of as the Model of human
Virtue,

SERM. Virtue, will any Man pretend to say that
 IX. whatever he did was purely and solely
 from right Intentions, without any mixture of private Grudge, Envy, Pride, and the like Passions? Had he no Weaknesses in his Understanding, no Oddnesses of Humour, no unaccountable Byass in his Temper and Inclination which determined him? If we considered how many things were necessary to constitute an Action perfectly Right, we should soon be sensible that there is no one Action, much less a Life which consists of so many Actions, which does not need the Mercy of God to supply its Deficiencies.

I am not now talking of absolute Perfection (give me leave here to repeat what you have heard before in another Discourse, for I can't speak my Sense in clearer Words) I am not talking, I say, of absolute Perfection, or the Perfection which belongs to God: We have nothing to do with That but to adore it. I speak of human Perfection, that which in the primary and original Notion of Man belongs to Him and none else. If there are two
 Ways,

Ways, one leading to my Good, the other SERM.
to my Evil, or one to a greater Good and IX.
the other to a Less, I am concerned, and
none else, to know the Right from the
Wrong, and to walk in it. But it is cer-
tain in fact, that our Understandings and
Inclinations some how or other are not
right set to Things; tho' we retain a ge-
neral Inclination to Good and Truth, yet
we stand something awry to every In-
stance of one and the other. This is the
present State of Man, and such is our
Depravity and Defection from that Inte-
grity which should belong to the human
Nature; so that partly from a Defect of
Understanding, we are incapable of seeing
all the several Motives which ought to
influence us in our Actions; and partly
from a wrong Byass in our Affections, for
want of being rightly ballanced, we chuse
Evil before Good, or a less Good before a
Greater.

Socrates the wisest of Heathens had
Wisdom enough, and a great Point of
Wisdom it was, to know that he knew
nothing: That is, nothing throughly and
adequately.

SERM. adequately. There was after all his Know-

IX. ledge a dark Side, a Mystery in every Thing. The same Wisdom might have led him to conclude that he did nothing perfectly ; that is, from a full View of Things, and without receiving some Inclination from the wrong Byass mentioned before.

From all these Considerations I conclude that the *Pharisee*, instead of assuming a Pride upon his Virtue, which did not become a State of Corruption, a Virtue which, besides that there was a great deal wanting to render every Action of it complete, if we examine deeply into the Fountains of it, might possibly spring from vitious Passions, or be greatly tainted with them : Instead of such a Pride which belongs to Perfection, he ought to have had a deep Sense of the many Deficiencies and Imperfections of his Virtue, that is, a Humility exactly proportioned to them. He would then have thanked God for his Virtues, and at the same Time prayed God to be merciful to his Sins.

I proceed

I proceed to the Character of the *Publican*, who is represented by our *Saviour* standing at a great Distance from the Temple, as unworthy to approach nearer so sacred a Place; not so much as lifting up his Eyes unto Heaven; but smiting upon his Breast, and saying, *God be merciful to me a Sinner!* that is, testifying all the utmost Marks of Humiliation by his Posture; his Action, and his Words. SERM. IX.

Now as we allowed the *Pharisee* to be Sincere, we must allow the same Sincerity to the *Publican*, when he professes the deep Sense of his Sins, and of the Need which he had of the Mercies of God. He was a Sinner we grant, and had failed probably in some or many of those Articles which the *Pharisee* had been enumerating: Perhaps he had extorted: (for that the *Publicans* were generally charged with) perhaps he had lived irregularly, and neglected those Duties of Piety which he owed to God: The Design of the Parable, I say, will bear us out in supposing this: But at the same Time he had a full Sense of the Enormity of those Sins, of his own

T

Vileness

SERM. Vileness and Corruption, consequently a

IX. Detestation of it, violent Struggles and Endeavours against it, so many Steps at least towards overcoming it, and together with this Humiliation he gives Glory to God, by placing all his Hopes not in his own Righteousness, but in the Mercies of God. For otherwise to confess his Sins, and at the same Time to love them and practice them as much as ever without any Restraint, this would have been a Mock-Confession and a Mock-Humility, beside the Intention of the Parable to take Notice of. His Humility was real and He sincere.

It had been better indeed, if together with his Humility, he had had the Righteousness of the *Pharisee*. He had been guilty of gross Enormities, and perhaps still felt strong Propensions towards them; Sins which would admit of no Excuse, and which therefore he does not pretend to excuse: For which Reason our Lord does not say that he went down to his House justified, but *justified rather than the other*; still better accepted than the *Pharisee*

On Humility.

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Pharisee, with somewhat more Virtue, but infinitely more Proud.

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IX.

It remains now in the *last* Place to shew why *Jesus Christ* Pronounces in favour of the *Publican*: Why a greater Degree of Corruption, or which is the same, a less Degree of Virtue joined with Humility, is preferable to a greater Degree of Virtue where it is accompanied with an enormous and insufferable Pride and Self-Sufficiency.

I shall at present offer but two Reasons, and the first is this.

The Pride arising from a Notion of Perfection intirely defeats the whole Design of our *Saviour's* coming into the World. He *came not to call the Righteous, but Sinners to Repentance; to seek and to save that which was lost.* We are now to suppose that all Mankind have a Depravity in their Natures, some greater and some less, but all a great deal; which necessarily incapacitates them in the same Proportion for the Happiness which would otherwise of Course belong to them; in other

SERM. Words, which subjects them to Misery
 IX. and Unhappiness. Where a Man then
 will not be made sensible of his Illness,
 it is impossible he can accept a Remedy ;
 where he insists upon a Righteousness of
 his own, and from thence a Happiness
 as his Due, it is impossible he can ever
 accept the Righteousness of God, and a
 Happiness which therefore must wholly
 proceed from the Grace of God.

Now *Jesus Christ* is the great Remedy
 which God has provided for this universal
 Sickness of Mankind, the great Propitia-
 tion for the Sins of Men, who is to repair
 all the Evils and Mischiefs of the Fall.
 For thus in the *Christian* Scheme stands
 the Order of Things. There is first in
 Nature and Idea a State of Rectitude, and
 of Course a State of Happiness proporti-
 oned to it belonging to Man : There is
 then conceived a Fall or Departure from
 that perfect State of Rectitude and Hap-
 piness, that is, there is a State of Corrup-
 tion and Misery : This is in fact the Pre-
 sent State of Mankind. In proportion to
 this Corruption must be the Sense of the
 Corruption,

Corruption, and in proportion to the Mi- SERM.
 sery, a Sense of the Misery due to Cor- IX.
 ruption. If therefore we would ever get
 rid of this miserable Condition, we must
 have recourse to the Mercies of God, who
 alone is able to redeem and rescue us.

Here some would stop, as if this were
 sufficient to perform the Work of our Re-
 demption without the Interposition of *Je-
 sus Christ*. It is enough, they say, to be
 sensible of our Sins, to repent, to confess,
 to reform, in order to obtain Pardon, and
 restore Things to their antient State as if
 Sin had never been. And it is certain that
 a Sorrow, a Confession, a Reformation are
 excellent Beginnings, necessary Steps to-
 wards our Recovery, as they will certainly
 dispose us to make use of any Remedy
 which the Goodness and Wisdom of God
 shall provide for us. But it is strange
 reasoning from thence, that this is all
 which is necessary. Suppose by Intempe-
 rance I have given a mortal Wound to
 my Health: I am sensible of this, I am
 sorry for it, I refrain. This can never of
 it self restore me to a sound Habit of

SERM. Body ; for we suppose the Work to be
IX. done already : I want something which
shall undo the ill Effects of my former
Intemperance, and make it as if it had
never been. There is reached out to us
from Heaven, we'll suppose, a Remedy
which will do this effectually. Now with
all my other good Dispositions I must take
this Remedy, or the former ill Effects
will never be destroyed. To be sorry for
what is past, and to be better for the Fu-
ture, will never of itself annihilate a past
Evil. It will be eternally operating Misery
and Death, without a proper Remedy.

And such is that proposed to us in *Je-
sus Christ* : A Remedy which, partly we
are able to make out by the Lights of
Reason and Revelation, and partly we
must trust the Wisdom of God for it ; is
so contrived as perfectly to cure the Dis-
orders, supply the Deficiencies, correct the
Depravities of Mankind, counteract all the
evil Effects of Sin both in itself and in its
Consequences to Us and to the whole
World, and make it as if it had never
been : And consequently to be a full, per-
fect,

fect, and sufficient Atonement and Satisfaction for the Sins of the whole World. SERM. IX.

But to find any Benefit from this divine Remedy, we must take it, and in the Manner which he has prescribed us: We must receive it by Faith, for which his Providence has taken Care to give us sufficient Foundation. But all this is absolutely impossible, if we are not antecedently disposed for it by a due Humility, which therefore our blessed *Saviour* ever insists on as the Ground-Work of *Christianity*.

And now we see the Reason of the Difference between Religion and Morality, which we hinted at the Beginning. It was the Business of Moral Writers to observe the Virtues of Mankind, their Excellencies and good Effects. But it was the Design of *Christianity* to apply itself wholly to the Weakness and Imperfection of Men; and to insist upon all the Consequences which follow upon such Imperfection, that is, Humility, Repentance, and Self-Condernation, a Righteousness and Happiness not our

SERM. own, but the Gifts of God ; all the hum-
 IX. bling and mortifying Doctrines contained in
 the *Gospel*: For *Jesus Christ* would have
 had no Business in the World, as he says
 himself, had not the Fall and Imperfection
 of Men made it necessary for God to re-
 store us again to our lost Integrity.

And therefore it can be no Wonder if he
 so strongly declares against the Pride of the
Pharisee, because it necessarily precludes a
 Man against his Remedy, and leaves him
 sealed up under all the Misery of his Sin ;
 Whereas the *Publican*, tho' guilty of great
 Sins, is yet by this true Sense of them al-
 ready well prepared for the Mercies of God,
 and will greedily lay hold of any Remedy
 which his Goodness shall point out to him.

The *Second Reason* I shall mention, why
 the Humility of the *Publican* is preferable
 to the Pride of the *Pharisee* tho' with fewer
 Faults, regards the Duties of Humanity
 and Charity which we owe to Men. As
 Religion has ordered Matters, there is great
 Provision made for mutual Love and Com-
 passion.

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passion. For as we are all born of one common Father, and thus are Brethren by Virtue of that Descent, so we are all derived from one corrupted Stock, and so are become Brethren in Corruption as well as Humanity. There is none of all the Human Race exempted from this fatal Evil, which has poisoned all the Posterity of *Adam*.

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IX.

This furnishes us with the best Reason in the World why we should be tender, and humane and compassionate towards our Brother labouring under the Burthen and Infirmities of Sin; because if we have a right Notion of ourselves, we must all be sensible of great Corruptions of some Kind or other lurking in our Hearts as well, and therefore discern strong Features of Resemblance and Brotherhood still subsisting between us. We shall see Reason to acknowledge that our best Actions come vastly short of Perfection, and infinite Cause to bless God for giving us Means of supplying their Deficiency by the Merits of *Jesus Christ* our common *Saviour*. And thus being

SERM. ing tied together by our common Nature,
 IX. our common Corruption, and our common
 ~~~~~ Redemption, which are so many Foundations of Brotherhood, this threefold Cord will not easily be broken: But we shall still maintain those Duties of Compassion and Humanity to Mankind, which ought never to be dissolved.

Whereas the proud Man, conceited upon his Perfection, will hardly acknowledge any Relation to the Rest of Mankind, except some very few proud as himself: For others he has nothing reserved but Scorn and Contempt. They are a populace *accursed of God*, as the *Pharisees* called the common People of the *Jews*; they are *Publicans and Sinners*, they are *Sinners of the Gentiles*, they are in the modern Phrase, Fools and Asses, they are something or other of a different Species, to which no kind Offices of Humanity or Charity are due.

Conformably therefore to our Blessed Saviour's Decision upon those two Characters we may safely pronounce, that a *Cato*, an Assemblage of great Virtues, joined with  
 an

an insupportable Pride and Contempt of SERM. others, is a Character not so amiable to IX. Men, or acceptable to God, as another with fewer Virtues, or shaded with some Faults, where there is proportioned to them a Humility towards God, and a Compassion and Charity towards Men.

For the Perfection of Man now, is not the same that it was in a State of Integrity. There nothing less was Perfection than Perfection itself in its truest Sense ; for the Human Nature was then capable of it. But as Things are now, the Meaning of it must be softened and accommodated to our present Condition : And a perfect Man is he, not whose Virtue is absolutely complete, for that is now impossible ; but who to all the Virtues which are capable of growing from the remaining Powers of Nature, joins a Humility proportioned to the Want of his Perfection : For that will certainly call down upon him the Graces of God to supply the Vacuity. And thus Virtue and Humility, the remaining Powers

SERM. Powers of Human Nature, and the Grace  
IX. of God, will give us still a Perfection as  
great as ever, a Perfection of Righteousness  
here, and a Perfection of Glory in the  
World to come,

*Give us this, O God Almighty, for Jesus  
Christ's Sake, to whom with the Father  
and the Holy Ghost be given all Glory now  
and ever. Amen.*





# S E R M O N X.

On JUSTICE.

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PSALM xcvii. 2.

*Righteousness and Judgment are the Habitation of his Throne.*



It is probable that in the first Intention of the Author, this Psalm might be a Song of Triumph upon some great Salvation which God had wrought for his People. Hence it was that *Zion was glad, and the Daughters of Judah rejoiced*; hence that *Jehovah is exalted high above all the Earth, far above all*

SERM.  
X.

SERM. *all Gods*; and hence that magnificent Description of him, *Clouds and Darknes are round about Him, Righteousness and Judgment are the Habitation, or rather the Basis and Support of his Throne.* For these Words compared with those in the 1st Verse of xcixth Psalm, where the Lord that reigneth is he that sitteth between the Cherubims, seem pretty plainly to point us to the Residence which he chose for his Glory, in a Cloud between the Cherubims over the Ark where the Law of Moses was laid up. And thus by Those that love the Lord, the Saints, the Righteous, the Upright in Heart, will be understood that chosen People, that Righteous Nation who are called upon to rejoice. And happy undoubtedly were the People who had the Lord for their God.

But as the Mind was elevated by so noble a Subject, it was natural that the Ideas should enlarge themselves: That God from being the protecting Divinity of a favoured Nation, should be God of the whole Earth; that instead of residing in a Cloud over the Law of Moses, he should appear enthroned in



in Heaven with Clouds and Thick Darkness to cover him, and supported by everlasting Righteousness and the Eternal Law of Things, upon which his Being and Authority are firmly established. In this View, those that love the Lord, the Saints, the Righteous, the Upright, not of our People, but of the whole Earth, and its remotest Regions, have the utmost Reason to *rejoice* and be *exceeding glad*.

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It was natural, I said, that Things should thus appear to the Mind of the Royal Prophet : And the express Words of the 1st Verse shew that they did so ; in which because *the Lord is King, the whole Earth is to rejoice, and the Multitude of the Isles to be glad thereof*.

But if the Words themselves did not justify us in this extended Meaning, yet the Reason of Things obliges us to understand it thus ; it being impossible to account for the Justice of God towards a particular Nation, but upon the Bottom of that Universal Righteousness and Justice which he deals out to all the World.

Righteousness

SERM. Righteousness and Justice differs from  
 X. Judgment only as Judgment is the Form  
 and Operation of Justice ; Judgment is  
 Justice put into the Form of Law and  
 duly executed. And these are said here to  
 support the Throne of God, to signify to  
 us, that all Authority and Sovereignty, even  
 that of God himself, is founded upon Jus-  
 tice, and an equal Administration of it.  
 This will therefore lead us to discourse of  
 Justice, both as it concerns God and Man ;  
 its Nature and Excellence ; to vindicate the  
 Divine Administration in the steady and  
 uniform Execution of his Laws ; to shew  
 it consistent with Goodness, with Grace,  
 and Forgiveness of Sins, and with the ma-  
 ny repeated Precepts to Men of Charity,  
 Mercy and Forgiveness.

This is become the more necessary by  
 that strange Confusion of Ideas which ap-  
 pears in the vulgar Notions of these Mat-  
 ters ; while they represent Goodness incli-  
 ning one Way and Justice another, some-  
 times This and sometimes That victorious,  
 and yet both at once necessary and essential  
 to the Deity : While some seem to describe  
 Justice

Justice as a Kind of authorized Cruelty, and others by too diluted Notions of it under an Appearance of Goodness and Mercy quite enervate it, and leave it without any Force or Use.

SERM.

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And that we may go to the Bottom, it will be proper to observe in general concerning the Divine Government, that it comprehends all Nature animate and inanimate, Natural Things as well as Moral Agents; which are all governed in a Manner suited to their respective Beings: Natural Things by the Laws of Nature, and Moral Agents by the Laws of Right and Justice. These two Kinds of Laws are formed exactly with the same Proportions, and flow from One Principle in God, and differ only as the Subject to which they are applied.

Those which we here call Laws of Nature, are indeed the necessary Results of the different Powers of Natural Things; which Powers as they are received from God, so is likewise that Relation between them on which these Laws are founded. In comparing Things one may be equal to another,

U

or

SERM.

X.

or doubly greater or weightier; and according to these Proportions do they operate in the Action that passes and repasses between them: That is, equal Things will affect alike and be alike affected; a Thing doubly greater or weightier will in its several Manner operate with double the Force, and receive double the Submission. Thus every Thing assumes the Rank given it by God according to its Proportion, and is acknowledged in it by all the Inanimate Creation.

In this View, as Things are conceived to act regularly according to their several Proportions of Power, every Thing proceeds with the same Necessity, as in Numbers 2 is equal to 2, and 4 is double to 2: This Way the Government of God is administered in a Way of Power; no Being can claim any Right beyond what it is intitled to by its Measure of Power, and so much it certainly enjoys: And by the same Title, an infinite Power, God Almighty claims and possesses an absolute Sovereignty over all.

But

But when we talk of Moral Agents, SERM.  
these same Proportions are conceived in X.  
another Light: For the same Proportions  
there are undoubtedly between Men. One  
Man may be either Equal to another  
Man, or of double the Importance; One  
Action may be either Equal, or twice as  
momentous, and do twice the Good or  
Mischief that another does. Where two  
Men are Equal therefore, if a third Man  
considers them as Equal, and deals Equally  
with them; or where Persons or Actions  
are Unequal, if he considers them as Une-  
qual, and deals with them accordingly in  
their true Proportion; we shall say then  
that such a Man acts not as he must do,  
but as he should or ought to do; not from  
Necessity, but according to Right. In ei-  
ther Case the Proportions are the same;  
the same Truth and the same Numbers  
will express it with this Difference, that in  
one View 2 and 2 must make 4, and in  
the other that they should or ought to make  
4: In one it is Necessary, in the other  
it is Right and Fit. The Liberty which  
we conceive in Moral Agents creates this  
Distinction.

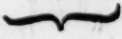


SERM.

X.

And hence arises a new Set of Laws proceeding from God in the same Order and Proportion as the other, Laws of Right and Justice, which stand to Moral Agents exactly as those Laws of Power to necessary Things. As in one Line God has of Necessity all Power over necessary Things, so in the other he has of Right all Authority over rational Beings: And by one and the other he is supremely qualified for the Government of the World.

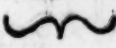
But as Power and Authority are the same Thing in God, only differently called according to the Subject to which they are applied, both alike supported by Truth, one under the Consideration of Necessity, and the other of Right and Justice: It is very common and very safe to neglect these accidental Distinctions, and traverse the Names in such Manner as to attribute to One what properly belongs to Another. Justice and Truth have a different Meaning; but as they are essentially the same, and to act justly is to act according to the Truth of Things, *Verum* is used in the best Authors to signify the same with *Iustum*. Laws properly

properly belong to Justice and Authority; SERM.  
yet because what must be, it is likewise X.  
perfectly fit and just that it should be,   
they are attributed to Necessity and Power;  
and on the other hand, however apt we  
are to divide these Things now, we shall  
find upon the Whole, that in disobeying  
the Laws of God we do not only offend  
against his Authority but his Power; not  
only against Right and Justice, but against  
Necessity itself: For Justice must be done  
one Way or other.

Again, as Beauty and Harmony, and  
whatever is regular, graceful, and be-  
coming, are founded upon Proportion,  
Those being to the Eye and Ear what  
That is to the Reason, it follows that  
where there is perfect Justice, there is per-  
fect Beauty and Harmony and Order; and  
every Defect there is ugly, irregular and  
discordant. Could we imagine therefore  
upon the Whole, that there are Instances of  
the contrary Practice in the Administration  
of Providence; could one Example be pro-  
duced, where, upon a true Calculation, it  
might be affirmed that God either reward-

SERM. ed or punished out of this Proportion,  
 X. where he treated Evil as Good, or Good as  
 Evil, or any Degree of either as less or  
 more than it really is; put the gentlest  
 Supposition that some one Favourite was  
 more rewarded or less punished: and this  
 one Disproportion, this one Lye, this one  
 Injustice would destroy the Justice, the  
 Truth, the Beauty of the Whole, and shew  
 that God directed his Actions by no Rule,  
 or by some other than that of Right Reason,  
 and Truth and Justice.

This may indeed in some Sort contradict  
 the common Notions of Goodness, according  
 to which, to relax Punishment and enhance  
 Reward, seems not only consistent with,  
 but becoming and necessary to infinite  
 Goodness. Now before I come directly to  
 answer this, it must be granted that if  
 Goodness requires one Thing, and yet Justice  
 and Truth and Order require the quite  
 Contrary, these Attributes are absolutely  
 inconsistent, and can never belong to one  
 Being: Those or This must be sacrificed to  
 the most prevailing. I say not this with a  
 Design to dispose us to part with

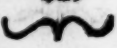
with any, but on the contrary to prepare SERM.  
us for the Proof which is coming, that X.  
what is perfectly just is also perfectly good,   
and consequently that Goodness differs  
from Justice no otherwise than Truth and  
the others mentioned before, by a different  
Consideration only. Goodness then is Ju-  
stice considered as it is necessary to the  
Happiness and Well-Being of the Whole.

This Happiness and Well-Being we will  
now suppose that God intends. He must  
then contrive some how that nothing shall  
deprive us of this Happiness which he in-  
tends for us. Natural Things are to be  
prevented in a Way of Power by those  
Laws of Nature, according to which,  
whatever is evil and destructive, should of  
Necessity be either controlled in its Opera-  
tion, or by its Destruction or otherwise re-  
pair the Happiness it had taken away. How  
Evil came at all either into the Natural or  
Moral World, is a Question which I am not  
concerned in; but to suppose Evil and to suf-  
fer it uncontrolled or uncompensated, is to  
give it Licence to prey upon Good, and to  
poison the Happiness of the Universe. A

SERM. Tenderness or Compassion for Evil is plainly  
X. Enmity to Good.

But where God has to deal with Evil in Moral Agents, that is, Beings not under the Laws of Necessity, and yet he would provide in the best Manner for our Happiness, he must contrive something which shall be proportioned to them, just as Necessity is to necessary Things: In other Words, there must be Laws of Justice which shall controul the Operation of Evil, as far as it can be controlled in a Moral Agent by all Considerations that can influence the Mind; and where that fails, and the Evil passes into Act, by Punishment or otherwise extort a Reparation adequate to the Injury: So that upon the Whole, Justice shall answer its End as effectually under a State of Liberty, as Power under a State of Necessity. Without this as there is a Defect in Justice, so there is a Want of Goodness proportioned; it being left in the Power of Evil to destroy or diminish the Happiness of the World without Compensation.



So far indeed is the Punishment of Evil SERM.  
from being an Objection to Goodness, that X.  
it necessarily proceeds from it. For, for the   
same Reason and in the same Degree that we  
love Good, we must hate Evil; and if we  
suppose God in a supreme Degree to fa-  
vour and promote the Well-Being of his  
Creation, he must in the same Degree dis-  
countenance and punish Evil which would  
destroy it. So that not only in Respect of  
Truth, Justice, and Proportion, but of  
Goodness too, Evil stands to Evil just as  
Good to Good in every Degree of it; and  
Punishment is not only the justest and  
most natural Re-action to Evil, but it is  
also the kindest and most benevolent, and  
that which necessarily flows from the  
highest Goodness. And if it be good to  
punish Evil, it is good to punish a greater  
Evil worse, and to repay the greatest Evil  
with the greatest Punishment.

In short, if you suppose this done, you  
suppose every Thing that can possibly pro-  
ceed from infinite Goodness towards main-  
taining the Happiness of the Whole. You  
suppose all possible Check and Discourage-  
ment

SERM. to Evil in its Birth, that is consistent with  
 X. a Moral Creature, that is, all the Good-  
 ness that can be shewn to the evil Agent  
 himself. You suppose a constant Power  
 operating towards the suppressing and  
 keeping down the Growth of Evil: And  
 where it has actually diffused its Venom,  
 you suppose an adequate Satisfaction made  
 to the Injured, either by the just Gratifi-  
 cation of a certain Revenge upon Evil, or  
 by some other Way, that he shall have no  
 Reason to complain.

So that the Punishment of Evil may be  
 considered in all these Lights: *First*,  
 which is the Mother-Notion of all the  
 rest, as a true, proportioned, and necessary  
 Return of Evil for Evil; and so far it is  
 Justice to the Offender: Then as an ade-  
 quate Compensation made to Good; and  
 thus it is Justice to the Injured: Next, as  
 it operates backward upon the Fear, and  
 creates all the Check that can be given to  
 an evil Action, as it clears off the Guilt  
 of it when past, and works forwards  
 towards restoring the Mind into a right  
 State for the Future; it is an Act of  
 Goodness

Goodness to the Offender himself, and all SERM.  
the offending Part of the World; and the X.  
only Goodness that can be shewn them: ~~~~~

And *Lastly*, as it suppresses Evil; it promotes the Happiness and Well-Being of All: And so it is Universal Goodness and Benevolence. Under all these Notions it is equally true; it being impossible for any act of Justice towards an Offender to want either of them, though some have chosen one and some another to account for the Expediency of Justice.

The Justice or Righteousness of God thus established, let us next consider his Judgment, in what Manner it is that he provides for the Execution of Justice. Since Good must be rewarded, and Evil punished, by what Laws does God attain these Ends?

Now it is evident that Man is capable of Retribution no further than he is capable of doing Good or Evil, and so far it is due to him. Suppose any Being placed beyond the Reach of Human Actions, and it is impossible a Man can deserve any Thing with Regard to him: Where there  
is

SERM. is no Action, there is no Re-action ; there

X. can be no Ground for that Proportion to  
 work upon, in which we have shewn that  
 the Effence of Justice consists. This will  
 more plainly appear by considering Man  
 in those more remarkable Relations in  
 which he stands to himself, his Neighbour,  
 his Country, to the World, and to God.

As to Himself, he is capable of doing  
 Good and Evil ; some Actions are evi-  
 dently beneficial, and others mischievous ;  
 some tend to promote his own Happiness,  
 and others to destroy it : Those must be  
 cherished, and These checked. And cer-  
 tainly it cannot be more effectually done.

There is a most exact Justice observed  
 between a Man and Himself. It is here  
 in the most proper Sense *an Eye for an  
 Eye, and a Tooth for a Tooth* : For it be-  
 ing the same Person that gives and receives,  
 the Return must be exactly proportioned.  
 And accordingly the same Action that  
 does the Wrong, punishes it ; the same Per-  
 son that strikes out an Eye, loses it ; he that  
 does a Benefit, the same receives it, and in  
 the

the same Measure. I do not say this for SERM.  
 the Conceit of it, but because it is really X.  
 the Foundation of all Justice; and if  
 we well understand it here, we shall easily perceive it every other where. Now could we suppose what is impossible, that a Man could do himself any Mischief and not suffer for it, what could defend him against himself, and prevent him from being his own Destruction!

But here are some Things to be considered. There are Actions which instantaneously affect our Well-Being, and there are those which require Time in the Operation. Some hurt us immediately, some not till the next Morning, some Weeks or Months or Years hence, others perhaps in the next Generation or several Generations to come, if you will allow me with the old *Patriarchs* to suppose ourselves continued in our Posterity. It is well known that Intemperance lays a Foundation of Distemper in our Constitution, which Children yet unborn must suffer for. And again it may be observed of all our Actions, that they do not spend  
 their



SERM. their whole Influence at once, but perpetuate

X. themselves in some Sort to all succeeding  
 Time. The Bruises received in our Youth are felt again in old Age ; an Eye once lost is for ever lost ; and a Wound in our Fortune sticks close to it and creates an everlasting Abatement. (I chuse to Instance in Evil, because there lies the great Objection against Justice ; it will be easy to make the Application to Good) As therefore the Notion of doing Evil is enlarged, it is necessary that the Punishment should be enlarged with it. Accordingly as the Action is considered to be done at once, we suffer at once ; as it operates at a Distance, we are punished at the same Distance ; as it is perpetuated, the Punishment is perpetuated : The Evil can be considered, in no View, in which the Punishment does not keep even Pace with it.

It seems then that in this little World of Man, Justice is administered to Perfection within Himself. I speak now of his Actions as far as they concern Himself only, and terminate there ; for under another  
 Consideration

Consideration, as his Neighbour, his Country, and the World, have a Right in his Well-Being, the same Actions will come

SERM.

X.

before another Tribunal. As to what regards Himself only, there wants but this to complete whatever can be expected from Justice and Goodness : That because it is impossible in any Action to have a clear and explicit View of all its Consequences, he should some how have a general Notice of the true Value and Importance of it, and consequently sufficient Reason to ground a Fear proportioned to the future Evil. And this Notice God has graciously provided us with, partly by those natural Presignifications of Fear and Misgiving, partly by our own Experience and Reason improved by that of others, and partly by Revelation from himself. And where after all a Consequence follows from any Action of our own no Way to be foreseen, we are not accountable to ourselves for that Consequence, nor therefore does it fall within the Justice that concerns ourselves. It lies upon some other Justice to answer this.

And

SERM. And now what is there in all this which

X. we would not wish to be? Would we be  
excused from those Fears which anticipate  
a Future Evil that we are bringing upon  
ourselves? But then there would be no-  
thing left to check us from rushing pre-  
cipitantly to our Ruin. Would we chuse  
to forgive ourselves the Evil we have done,  
abate the Punishment, and not preserve the  
Remembrance and Remorse that attends  
it? But then we should deny to a guilty  
Mind the Ease which arises from a Sense  
of that Satisfaction which it is making to  
Justice, that Approbation and Self-  
Applause which lies concealed under this Re-  
morse, those Pleasures which it feels in  
returning to a true State of Health and  
Rectitude; we should deny to it all Possi-  
bility of Recovery, and to ourselves every  
Controll that can prevent us from our own  
Destruction. Thus is Justice the Ground  
and Support of our own Existence.

It is Time now to pull the Man abroad,  
and to consider him in the Relation which  
he bears to another Self, I mean his  
Neighbour. We have so far supposed  
these

these two Persons in One; now let us SERM.  
gently and tenderly draw them asunder, X.  
and it will appear, that what was true of  
these two Persons both together, will be  
true of them at a little Distance, and at a  
greater and a greater; for the Persons  
are not supposed to be altered, but only  
removed. The same Communication of  
Good and Evil, the same Proportion  
subsisting between them as between a  
Man and Himself, it is equally just,  
fit and necessary to the Well-Being of  
Both in this State of Separation, that  
there should be observed the same Laws  
of Retaliation. And pursuant to this,  
we return Value for Value, Kindness for  
Kindness, and Evil for Evil.

Agreeably to what was said before,  
the first and most ancient Return it is  
natural to suppose was to give back the  
same for the same, An Ox for an Ox,  
an Eye for an Eye; by degrees the  
Worth of an Ox for an Ox, and the  
Value of an Eye for an Eye; at length  
a certain Sum of Money for Things  
that might be exchanged, and some few  
X corporal

SERM. corporal Punishments for every Kind of  
 X. corporal Injury ; and *lastly*, a Mixture  
 and Confusion of Muleſt and Punish-  
 ment.

But here must be observed this Difference, that whereas in the Case of Self-Wrong the Punishment was instantaneous, and one with the Evil, here as the Persons are separated more or less, Time is required for the Action to pass and repass ; as the Injury is some Time in travelling from one to the other, so also is the Return, and consequently exposed in a long Passage to a great Number of Accidents, which may alleviate or wholly divert the Stroke. And because Judgment is not executed speedily, Men are apt to imagine they may do Evil more securely to their Neighbour than to themselves : and the rather, because it may frequently happen, especially where the Distance is supposed great, that the injured Person may not know his Enemy, or for Want of Power, or otherwise, may not be in a Condition to do himself Justice where he does know him.

And



And every Thing of this Kind lets loose SERM.  
the Rein to mutual Injury. X.

But however that may be, thus much is certain, that Evil is due to him that does it from him that suffers it in every Instance, one as well as another; that this Justice is full as necessary to the Preservation of any two Men, as of every single Man; that if it be possible to escape this Return, then God has not made the same Provision for the Well-Being of two Men, as of one in a State of Solitude; and that whatever is wanting to perfect Justice, is so far deficient in Goodness. In the mean Time the Sufferer has a Right to Justice, and the Offender knows it, that is, he knows himself to have done Wrong, and to be obnoxious to Justice: And consequently cannot avoid Fears, and Jealousies, and Mistrusts, and a Consciousness of deserving ill.

Here it becomes proper to consider the Nature of Forgiveness. We do not yet suppose Men in a State of Government Divine or human, where God has either

SERM. reserved Vengeance to Himself, or transferred it upon the Magistrate; but every  
 X. Man loose and independent, and having in himself the whole Right of Justice.

Now it must be acknowledged that we have naturally an Abhorrence of Evil and the Author of it; that nothing can or ought to reconcile us to Evil; such a Disposition (if it could be supposed) taking off all Fence against our own Destruction: An Enemy therefore as an Enemy, we must and ought to hate. But here arise many Considerations.

All Mankind being necessarily united together by the same Tie of one common Nature, this may be supposed a Ground for Universal Love and Benevolence, and the Enmities arising from particular Interests interfering, may be conceived to be floating up and down upon this Bottom of Universal Love consequently there are some Offices of Humanity and general Charity ever due between Enemies, and therefore in repaying Injuries we must be very careful not

to strike too deep into this Fundamental Love, which must continue an eternal Duty. SERM.  
X.

Great Allowance must be made for Ignorance in the Intercourse between Man and Man. We must hate an Enemy, but perhaps he is not an Enemy: The Evil done us was either beside or beyond his Intention. And if it be supposed that we have generally a full Understanding of the Evil, but not a full Knowledge of the Intention; that we understand the Evil to be fully as great as it is, but the Malevolence of the Intention is generally less than we imagine it; this will be a general Ground for some Abatement to be made in our Resentments.

Again, Suppose him to have designed the Evil in all its Extent, but he is heartily sorry for it, he is disposed to make me all Satisfaction, he will do me Services that shall countervail the Injury: To punish here were to punish a Friend, one that has already punished himself: I have an Equivalent, all that I can demand, and Forgiveness becomes Justice.

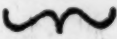
SERM. Suppose him to be an Enemy still, a  
 X. private Enemy but a publick Friend, a  
 Friend to the Society (for I here suppose  
 myself in one) and of great Importance  
 to my Country; here again it is right, and  
 just, and noble to sacrifice a small private  
 Injury to a publick Good: This is strictly  
 according to Truth and Justice; for  
 it is indeed forgiving a less Evil for a  
 greater Good which he does me in a Way  
 more important: But still it shews a ge-  
 nerous and a large Soul to be able to  
 comprehend so wide a Truth.

There is one Degree further, where I  
 may love my own Enemy or the Enemy  
 of my Country, from a View yet more  
 extensive, as being a Friend to Virtue, a  
 Member of that common Country to  
 which we all belong, a Fellow-Subject of  
 that which our *Saviour* called the *King-  
 dom of Heaven*. This is the Consideration  
 upon which *Christianity* justly requires  
 from us Love and Forgiveness, it is a Prin-  
 ciple of Union so transcendent, that all the  
 Differences of the World must melt away  
 before it, and become almost annihilated,

This

## On Justice.

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This is the highest Pitch of Generosity, SERM.  
for it is to be *perfect even as our Father* X.  
*which is in Heaven is perfect.* 

All this Forgiveness of Injuries, this Love of Enemies, is not only consistent with Justice, but necessarily flows from it: But to forgive Evil as Evil, absolute Evil without any Compensation, is not only impossible in itself, but unjust, unreasonable, and in every Respect unfit. For what is left to be the Object of Hatred, if Evil is not? Punishment as I said before is due to it; and the better a Man is, the more he will hate it, and the more vigorously he will punish it. Thus is Justice the Basis of mutual Happiness.

But because every single Man wants a sufficient Knowledge and Power to do himself Justice, he therefore calls to his Assistance the greater Knowledge and Power of a Society or Kingdom, into which for that Purpose he is associated.

This leads us to consider a Man as he stands to his Country. And here

X 4

too



SERM. too he is capable of doing Good and

X. Evil in a double Respect, either to particular Men, or to the Community in general. The former of these differs from what has been mentioned before; for here particular Men are considered as Members of a Community, and therefore the Good or Evil done them is done to the Community, and the Retribution now becomes a Duty incumbent upon the publick Officers and Judges, who are appointed Avengers to execute the publick Wrath upon Offenders. Here we have no Right, every Man to avenge himself, because Vengeance is lodged another where, and there in Case of Wrong we must apply for Justice.

There are other Actions which affect more directly the Community itself, and which therefore it is concerned to punish or reward equally with the former. For though they do not so remarkably affect the Interest or Being of any one Individual, yet where the Publick suffers, that Suffering is felt more or less, sooner or later, by every single Person.

The

*On Justice.*

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The Evil is not less but only more diffused. SERM. X.

Under this Kind, are comprehended all Crimes against the publick Authority, the established Order and Regularity, which is a Texture consisting of infinite Channels, through which the Life and Action is conveyed over the whole Body. These Crimes to narrow Minds may appear innocent and nothing at all, because as I said they do not remarkably affect any one Man's Person or Property, and yet may really do the Mischief of many the more notorious private Injuries, by weakening and undermining the whole. They are like a general Malignity of Air which spreads its Venom on all Sides, imperceptibly, and disposes Thousands to Sicknes and Death, though perhaps it never visibly kills one, and from the same narrow Principle it proceeds that publick Faith, publick Oaths, publick Honesty, and every Duty that concerns a large Society of Men, are generally disregarded and undervalued in Comparison with private Justice. It shews

SERM. shews a Spirit of Dissolution creeping in  
 X. among us, and by Degrees destroying  
 ~~~~~ this publick Sense.

Such are Offences against publick Persons, and above all, Kings, who, though they are indeed but one Man as others are in their private Person (a Discovery which some Triflers value themselves much upon) yet are ten thousand Men by their Character and Situation and Importance to the State: And that is all of them which we are really concerned with.

Now the Strength and Exaltation of a People, and the Establishment of the Thrones of Princes, depends greatly upon an equal and steady Administration of Justice: Every Failure creates a Weakness, and a general Neglect a total Dissolution; which is impossible as long as every Evil has its due Measure of Check and Suppression.

As to Forgiveness, it is plain that private Persons, as far as they have given up their Right to punish, have given up their Right to forgive; except it
 be

be called Forgiveness to deliver over SERM.
Enemies to the publick Vengeance. **X.**

And with regard to the Publick, without repeating any Thing said before, there subsists the same Right, the same Necessity, and Expediency of punishing Evil, as between private Persons: For Justice, as it supports distinct Persons, so it is the Basis of all publick Prosperity.

But here it is proper to remark of all Human Justice, even that which is regulated by the best Laws in the World, that it must of Necessity be imperfect. I do not mean now for Want of perfect Knowledge to come at Crimes, or Power to punish them; though that is a great deal; but because one Punishment must serve for ten thousand Crimes, every one of which has yet something distinguished, and one Law must decide ten thousand Cases which have every one their Difference: And consequently it is impossible perfectly to adapt Things as strict Justice requires.

Hence arises Room for Equity. For if any Legislature would endeavour to multiply

SERM. multiply Laws so far as to provide for

X. every Case that should come before them, it would not only be endless but worse than the Thing to be remedied: It being well known that Laws beyond a certain Number, are themselves a Grievance and Vexation. There must therefore in the Course of Things happen many Cases where Equity is wanting to supply the Law. Who indeed is to be trusted, and how far with this Equity, and whether the Expence and Delay and Difficulty in procuring it may not be equivalent to the Inconveniencies arising from the strict Execution of Law, are Questions which I do not presume to enter into: But I say only that there is a Ground for Equity to operate, not with a Design to break in upon Justice, but to complete it. For it is only to do what the Law itself would have done, if it were possible.

Thus in Punishment there are so many different Circumstances unprovided for by Law, that there is in Nature Room for Equity to be practised, which accordingly

ingly this Constitution has lodged in the SERM.
Breast of the Sovereign. And thus far X.
instead of defeating Justice, it is designed
to perfect it. This too is capable of
Abuse: And what is not? Especially if
this Power of preventing in some Cases,
where it is in itself reasonable and fit,
the Execution of Law, be interpreted ac-
cording to some watriſh Schemes of
Government, a Power to ſtop the Courſe
of Juſtice under the Notion of Mercy.
This may be right if Juſtice be Cruelty;
for then it muſt be Mercy to remit of it.
But if Juſtice be the higheſt Goodneſs,
if it be Mercy to the injured and in-
nocent Part of a Community, then cer-
tainly a promiſcuous Pardon of Crimes,
a general Relaxation of Punishment, a
Grace ſhewn undiſcriminateſy to every
Kind of Wickedneſs, is not ſo.

It remains now that we conſider Man
in the Relation in which he ſtands
to the World and to God. I join theſe
together, becauſe there appears the ſame
Difficulty as to the very Foundation of
Juſtice, with regard to both theſe. For

SERM. a mutual Intercourse of Good and Evil

X. having been laid down as the first
Ground of Justice, it may justly be questioned whether any Action of ours can affect in any Measure the Well-Being of the World, I mean the Sum of Things. We may every Man make himself happy or miserable; the Happiness of our respective Families greatly depends upon us; the Parish or City where we live may be the better or the worse for us; our Country or even a much larger Portion of the World may in some smaller Measure feel the Influence of our Actions. But whether God has put it in the Power of Man or any other Being to damage the whole, whether God has not so guarded his Workmanship, the most perfect Production of infinite Wisdom, that it shall suffer no real Evil from any Malevolence of Men or Devils, still remains a Question: Or rather there is no Question to be made, but God has provided that Things shall always upon the whole be most fit, most right and most good.

But

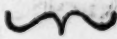
But with regard to the Deity, it is **SERM.**
strongly affirmed on all Sides, that no **X.**
Action of Man can make him more
or less happy ; that he is infinitely secure
in his own Beatitude : Nay, some have
ventured to say, that if we were to sup-
pose all Mankind, all the Creation
miserable, it could not disturb him
in the Possession of Himself, and of
that infinite Happiness which is essential
to him. So that it appears difficult to
conceive what Justice can pass between
Man on one Side, and God or the
World on the other.

As to the World, I agree that no-
thing can shake that most perfect Or-
der of Things, and diffuse Evil over the
Whole : But it has been likewise agreed
that we are capable of communicating
Good or Evil within a certain Portion
of it. But how is this possible ? The
most inconsiderable Suffering of the
meanest Person upon Earth is so much
Evil added, and in Appearance must en-
crease the Sum. And it would do so,
but for that Balance of Justice by which
there

SERM. there is an immediate Compensation made

X. for every Evil that is done, a Good to counterbalance it. Could you suppose Justice to have once left the World, could you imagine the least Evil without its Compensation, you must suppose a Wound, an incurable Wound given to this Beautiful Creation. But if that be impossible, as we allow it to be, and might easily be proved, it must for the same Reason be impossible but this Whole must have Justice done it for any Attempt made upon it.

Thus with regard to the Deity, it is a most certain Truth, that he is infinitely happy; that nothing can disturb his Beatitude; but for that Reason upon a universal Survey of Things he must be able to pronounce them good and right: For could he see a total Depravity, a general Defection from Truth, Justice and Goodness, and Evil Triumphant; just so far as such a State of Things contradicted the Divine Attributes, would it destroy the Happiness that resulted from them. He must be
supremely

supremely blest, but it is because he is SERM.
supremely able by his Justice to pre- X.
serve the Well-Being of the Whole. 

To suppose the Beatitude of God consistent with the Misery of the whole Creation, is somewhat the same as if we should say; that possessing in himself infinite Wisdom, he would still preserve this Attribute, if his whole Administration were foolish and irregular. He is infinitely wise and he must be so; but from thence it necessarily follows that every Thing must be administered with the most perfect Wisdom: And could there be supposed a Deficiency of Wisdom here, there must be supposed with it a proportioned Chasm in the Attribute itself. So in this Case, were Evil permitted to destroy the Happiness of the World, which is the Work and Image of God, that Perfection in the Creation which must be as long as we suppose the Deity himself perfect; it must at once destroy the Perfection and Happiness of the *Ever-Blessed* himself.

Every Evil therefore acts according to its Nature, makes impotent Attempts upon Good and the Fountain of Good. It
Y strikes

SERM. strikes directly at the Throne of God
 X. himself; but before it can reach it, it is
 of Necessity flung back by Justice in the
 Face of him that does it. The very same
 Necessity that keeps the Throne of God
 unshaken, provides that every Evil has its
 Punishment and Compensation. Thus
*are Judgment and Justice the Basis of his
 Throne.*

So far is it therefore from being impos-
 sible that there should be a Justice subsis-
 ting between God and Man, that there
 only it appears in Perfection: In other
 Instances between Man and Man, between
 a Man and the Community, it must for
 many Reasons be incomplete. There are
 a thousand Ways of evading it. And it is
 for that Reason that God in infinite Mer-
 cy as well as Justice has ordered that every
 Offence against our Neighbour, and every
 Crime against the State, be also Sin against
 himself; so that at the same Time we
 have Reason to fear a Punishment from
 Men, we may be infallibly assured of a
 Retribution from God.

'Tis not here as in Human Judgment,
 where it sometimes happens that Law
 is one Thing and Equity another; what
 is

is called Justice obliges us this Way, when **SERM.**
Truth and Goodness incline us the quite **X.**
contrary. These Things are all one in

God, so that he whose sins offer Violence at once to Truth, Right, Justice, Goodness, Power, all in the utmost Perfection. And Man has actually a Guilt accompanying it, a Sense which is compounded from all these Considerations, something like a Mountain overhanging him, something to which Punishment itself is an Ease, and which therefore inclines him to pray that this Mountain may fall on him, and save him from an Anguish insupportable.

From this Perfection of the Divine Government, there proceeds a new Set of Actions Good and Evil which respect God himself, and is properly called Religion as it is distinct from Morality : All those Actions which immediately and directly are referred to God and his Government of the World. These, though by the Supposition they do not directly in a visible Manner affect ourselves, our Neighbour, or our Country, are yet of the utmost Importance as they affect that which

SERM. is the Foundation and Perfection of all
 X. Happiness and of Being itself.

Here it might be shewn that it is impossible to deny to God his Honour without tearing up the very Ground of the Soul, and destroying the Happiness of the Mind in its very Essence. Of the same Consequence is Religion to support the Prosperity of a State ; and the mutual Happiness between Man and Man. But because as I said this operates at first invisibly and deep down from the Surface in the very Bottom and Foundation of Things ; and that requires some Time in corrupting before the Edifice will suffer at Top, thence it comes to pass that those Actions by which we signify the Honour we bear to God, and the Acknowledgment of his Sovereignty over us, are considered by short-sighted Men as trifling and unmanly Employments : And, on the contrary, every Instance of Prophaneness, Irreligion, the most notorious Neglect and Contempt of God are past over lightly and with an Air of Gallantry as Things below Notice. They hurt no one's Person or Property, it is said : There is no Harm but what we make ourselves. But what is God then ?

Is he something a great Way off, and SERM.
in which we have little Concern? No, X.
he is inmost and most essential to us all.
He is Truth, Justice, Goodness, and from
thence Happiness itself. And can we
root up these without hurting the Soul,
and in Consequence the Body, and every
Part of it? Can we slight Justice itself
without weakening the Foundation of
Law, and in Consequence confounding all
Property.

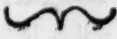
And now we are at Liberty to observe
concerning Offences against ourselves, our
Neighbour, our Country, and God;
that though they have every one a dis-
tinct Notion; yet they all concur in every
Instance of Offences. Thus every Injury to
our Neighbour, every Crime against the
State, every Sin against God comes round
most surely in Circles greater or less upon
ourselves, and consequently will be all
comprehended under Self-Wrong; so that
at the same Time we sin in any of these
Respects, we sin against our own Souls.
Again, The Evil we do to ourselves, our
Neighbour and our Country, is really done
to God, and in Defiance to his Govern-
ment and Authority; and so far they fall
Y 3 under

SERM. under the Consideration of Religion, and
 X. the Sanctions of Divine Justice : And in
 ~~~~~ Return, the civil Government is deeply  
 concerned to support the Honour of God  
 and the Interests of Men, every Attempt  
 upon which shakes the Foundations of its  
 Authority.

It has been said that there is no escaping the Justice of God ; for that is Justice itself armed with infinite Power and Knowledge. Consequently in the last Result of Things, Justice must be done not only to the World, but to every Man in it, and every Action of Man : For could it be truly said of any one Man that he has not had Right, the Benefit of his Proportion, it is Injustice as truly as if it were done to the whole World ; for 2 and 2 must and ought to make 4 as well in Grains of Sand as in the largest Globes. If it be said that it is impossible, but the Rights of the smaller must submit to those of the greater ; why then it is impossible that there should be Justice, and in Consequence Goodness, Truth, &c. For they are all concerned to see Right done in every Instance.

But how can it be impossible to an infinite



finite Power, which operates not only SERM.  
through the Ministry of Men, but com- X.  
mands all Nature animate and inanimate,   
visible and invisible? Fire and Hail,  
Snow and Vapours, Beasts and Stones,  
Angels and Devils, all perform his Word.  
How can it be impossible, when after we  
are dead to Men we are still alive to God?  
After we are escaped out of the Govern-  
ments of this World, we still find our-  
selves within the everlasting Kingdom of  
God? So far is it from being impossible  
that full Justice should be done, that it  
were easy to shew that it cannot possibly  
be otherwise. And consequently no Ob-  
jection can lie against the Justice of God  
from any Appearance of Things within  
certain Limits, as long as there is an Eter-  
nity to set Matters right. Things are as  
right here, and come as near to Justice as  
Time will admit; but to expect from  
Time what belongs to Eternity, to require  
Perfection from Bounds, is putting Things  
together that are infinitely disproportion-  
ed; 'Tis impossible.

But still the higher we carry the Ne-  
cessity of Justice, the more Difficult it  
seems to account for the Forgiveness of

SERM. Sins, which makes an Article of our Creed,  
 X. and is expressly affirmed in almost every  
 Page of the *Gospel*. We cannot say now,  
 as some considerable Men have done, that  
 Punishment is a Debt due to God from  
 Sinners which from Considerations of  
 Goodness he may remit without any Of-  
 fence to Justice : He may threaten Punish-  
 ments therefore because it is just, and af-  
 terwards remit them because it is good.  
 We go upon a Scheme which supposes it  
 the same Goodness to punish Evil as to  
 reward Good ; the Truth and Justice the  
 same in either. And indeed not to men-  
 tion the Violation of Truth, where God  
 is supposed to carry on the Ends of his  
 Providence by Falshood ; if this reason-  
 ing be right ; if Justice does not oblige  
 him to punish, and infinite Goodness in-  
 clines him to forgive ; who can doubt  
 which Way the Scales will turn ? And  
 what Effect can Threatnings have which  
 we have all Reason to think will never be  
 executed ? This therefore renders all the  
 Terrors of the Lord wholly ineffectual.

I am inclined to think that no Man  
 would have Recourse to such an Expedi-  
 ent as this is, but for the Difficulty he finds  
 in

in accounting for the Eternal Punishments in another World; and those, not as they are lain down in Scripture, but as they have been unskilfully described by Men who have too far indulged their Imagination. The Scripture affirms that the *Wicked shall go away into everlasting Punishment*, and accordingly they are described as suffering everlasting Pains : And this or to this Purpose is all that the Scripture discovers concerning this State. And nothing is more certain, more reasonable, nor more necessary to compleat the Idea of the Kingdom of God : For every Thing appears here under the Notion of Eternity ; He is himself Eternal, Man Eternal, his Laws are Eternal, the Violation of them is Eternal, and the Punishment of the Violation is Eternal. The Objection to this arises from a Notion that the Punishment continues when the Evil subsists no longer ; that we sin here, and are punished for ever when the Sin is no more.

But without doubt, the Person that is to suffer everlastingly, must be everlastingly a Subject for Punishment : He must be one that died in his Sins, sealed up under Impenitence, and rises again with the same Sins,

SERM.

X.

SERM. Sins, the same Impenitence to Eternity :

X. He is the wicked Man, wicked at his Death, when the Books are shut, the Account closed, and a Man receives his final Denomination. This is the Man that is to be punished eternally, because he is eternally wicked. For it is one and the same Man here represented in Time to the Eyes of Man, and there existing to God through Eternity ; here exposed to Punishment with all the Chances of Time, and there infallibly receiving his Recompence from the Necessity of Justice which only belongs to Eternity. There is nothing therefore in this eternal Justice which should oblige us to recur to such a Right of remitting Punishment : It should not be in Time, but it cannot be in Eternity.

What then means Forgiveness of Sins ? Nothing is plainer when we consider the Condition to which it is annexed, which is, Repentance, a Change of Mind, a Transformation of the Soul from Evil to Good : And this can never be affected without a Remorse and Self-Condernation proportioned to the past Evil, and a Desire of making Reparation. What Reparation is to be made for an Injury done to our Neighbour

bour or our Country it belongs to the Laws SERM.  
to determine where they think fit to inter- X.  
pose ; and in Cases where they do not, it  
must be made according to the truest Esti-  
mation we can form. And where a Mind  
is truly sensible of the Iniquity, this Repa-  
ration instead of being grievous, will un-  
lade it from a Burthen which oppressed it.  
But the Satisfaction which we owe to God,  
for Satisfaction he must have, he only can  
declare. We might safely say beforehand  
that it must be such as is best adapted to  
undo whatever Impiety had done ; it must  
be a Humiliation proportioned to that Pride  
of Heart from whence the Rebellion came ;  
it must be a Homage equivalent to the  
Breach made upon the Glory of his Govern-  
ment : This, and something of this Kind in  
general we might say concerning the Na-  
ture of the Equivalent, but no more. For  
how is it possible for us to trace a Sin thro'  
all its Consequences which spread them-  
selves infinitely wide in different Degrees  
through all Nature, or if we could, to find  
a Remedy for them ? God only can reveal  
it. And accordingly he has declared that  
a Faith in *Jesus Christ* is the only Satisfac-  
tion which he can accept ; not a cold Be-  
lief



SERM. lief in his Person and History only, but a  
 X. Submission of Heart whereby we acknowledge him in all his Characters, a Principle of Union whereby we are conformed to his Image, and united in the Humiliations and Sufferings of that great Atonement and propitiatory Sacrifice for the Sins of the World. The Evil it seems, is then perfectly repaired, and the Mind restored. And in these Circumstances Forgiveness becomes Justice, and God is ever disposed to forgive.

A Word or two concerning the Grace of God, which may seem to contradict the Notion of Justice which we have been establishing, and I have done.

As we receive from God our Beings, and every Thing that concerns them, it is evident that whatever Advantages we can have towards the rendring ourselves deserving the Happiness that is due to Good, are wholly derived from God, and accordingly all the Happiness we enjoy proceeds from his Goodness. In this View we Merit nothing, for our Merit itself is the Bounty of God. But so long as Merit and Reward go Hand in Hand; so long as this Goodness is distributed according to the Proportions of perfect Justice; so long as he never gives any Degree

gree of Happiness but where there are those Actions that deserve it: So long it will come exactly to the same, whether we attribute this Happiness to the Goodness or Justice of God. Thus the Grace of God is his Goodness extraordinary, and is the same in the extraordinary Revelation which he makes to our Faith, as his Goodness in the ordinary Course of his Providence discoverable to our Reason: And this Grace too has its Laws, its Proportions, and is distributed abroad too with the same Regularity of Justice as his Goodness. We never enjoy any Happiness from the Grace of God, but from the same Grace of God we enjoy the Fitness and Qualification for this Happiness: As eternal Life is the Gift of God, so do all those Virtues which qualify us for it, proceed from the Spirit of his Grace. There is no Deviation from those eternal Proportions of Justice, but agreeably to the Design and Genius of Revelation every Thing is here unknown, revealed but to our Faith, and consequently falls under the Notion of Grace, which is distributed abroad thro' every Action of Religion.

And since all the Arguments and Motives that can be offered for Virtue and Goodness  
are

SERM. are formed for us either by the Goodness or  
 X. the Grace of God, either in the ordinary or  
 { extraordinary Distribution of his Providence,  
 and there remains to Man no Part in all this  
 but to refuse to call them up and attend to  
 them, it follows that nothing is left to Man  
 to deserve but Evil: And that the Merit of  
 all his good Actions, and consequently the  
 Reward that attends them is ultimately due,  
 as Religion describes it, to the Goodness and  
 the Grace of God only, *from whom and  
 through whom and to whom are all Things.*

I have now finished a Discourse which  
 might easily have been made longer, but  
 very difficultly contracted. What was chief-  
 ly intended was to bring the Notions of  
 Justice which generally seem pretty much  
 confused into one consistent Scheme; and  
 to shew it equally true, reasonable, right and  
 good in the Punishment of Crimes as in the  
 Reward of good Actions. It has been ob-  
 served of some great Nations that they have  
 had wise Laws but unsteadily executed; they  
 have had Justice but have wanted Judg-  
 ment which is the Life of Justice. And one  
 great Reason of this seems to come from a  
 Notion, which I hope now appears ill-  
 grounded, that there was something in Pu-  
 nishment

nishment contrary to Goodness, that there is a Tenderness and Compassion due to Evil. There is an excellent Passage to this Purpose in the *Law of Moses*, where it is ordained in any criminal Case that shall come before the Judges, *they shall justify the Righteous and condemn the Wicked*: The Expression in the Original is wonderfully simple and strong: They shall "make or pronounce Righteous" the Righteous; and they shall "pronounce Wicked" the Wicked. This Expression shews that in one Case as well as the other, Judges in acting according to Justice act according to Truth; they declare the Righteous to be Righteous, and the Wicked to be Wicked, whereas the Contrary is all Lie and Contradiction; it is to declare Wicked the Righteous, and to declare Righteous the Wicked.

They are required not to *respect the Person of the Poor*, nor *honour the Person of the Mighty*, but in *Righteousness to judge their Neighbour*. They are called God's because, as our *Saviour* tells us, *the Word of God came to them*, or rather, because the Word of God "was lodged" with them, and from thence, as from the Oracles of God, the People were to fetch Answers of Justice.

And

SERM.

X.

SERM. And indeed it is a Godlike Thing to sit in  
 X. the Chair of Justice with an equal Hand,  
 and an Eye direct, dividing the Word of  
 God deposited with them; unmoved by Sol-  
 licitation, Friendship, Respect or Compass-  
 sion on one Hand, and on the other by  
 Animosity and Resentment.

Not that these Passions are to be rooted  
 up from us; they are of excellent Use in  
 private Life: As long as there is Virtue and  
 Merit unrewarded; as long as there is any  
 Vice insolent or triumphant; as long as there  
 is Innocence oppressed, Honesty and Indus-  
 try overloaded with numerous Families or  
 crossed by some unknown Providence of  
 God; as long as there are the Fatherless and  
 Widow, and ten thousand Cases which no  
 Laws can provide for: So long there can  
 never be wanting Subjects for Friendship,  
 Generosity, Resentment or Compassion: A  
 Man must be void of Humanity that wants  
 these Affections: But let them not appear in  
 the Seat of Justice to pervert and darken it,  
 and let Virtue have the Benefit of them.

*To God, Father, Son and Holy Ghost, be given  
 all Glory now and ever! Amen.*





# S E R M O N XI.

## On LIBERTY.

I P E T. ii. 16.

*As free, and not using your Liberty for a  
Cloak of Maliciousness, but as the Servants  
of God.*



THE Christian Religion is represented to us in the Holy Scriptures with every Advantage that can make it truly valuable and worthy of all Acceptation: Among others this of Liberty is frequently insisted on by Christ and his Apostles; and they could not represent it under any Notion more pleasing.

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XI.

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But

SERM.

XI.

But yet, as there is something inchanting in the Sound, where this undoubted Privilege of all Christians is ever so strongly asserted or supposed, we are frequently caution'd against the Abuse of it. Thus St. Paul to the Galatians, *You have been called, Brethren, says he, to Liberty; only use not Liberty for an Occasion to the Flesh: And St. Peter in the Words of the Text, Free, yet not using your Liberty for a Cloak of Maliciousness, but as the Servants of God.* And this same Apostle, by the Time he wrote his second Epistle, had lived long enough to see some gross Abuses of this Doctrine, where he speaks of those who promised Liberty, but were themselves the Slaves of Corruption.

In the Verses just before my Text, the Apostle had been pressing Obedience to Authority; this, join'd to the Usage of the original Word *Kaxia* in the sacred Writings, makes it reasonable to suppose, that he here particularly intends those who might make a wrong Use of Liberty, to cover a Spirit of Maliciousness, Envy, Ill-nature, and Contradiction to Government; a Corruption naturally enough arising from the first Appearance of Liberty, which

which seems to promise Independency and Exemption from all Rule. But this Mistake the Apostle wisely corrects by this Consideration, that we are still the Servants of God; no Liberty can discharge us from his Service, nor consequently from a Subjection to every Ordinance of Man for the Lord's Sake, whose Ordinances in the last Result of Things they really are; and for the same Reason are the Laws of Virtue and Morality still as binding as ever, nor have we any Licence to indulge the Flesh and its Appetites; for the Laws of Virtue are the Laws of God, and we are his Servants. The same will hold good in any Instance of Duty whatever, that we are still bound by the Service which we owe to God to submit to it.

This is the Apostle's Reasoning; according to which the Service of God might seem at first Sight, of all others, the strictest Bondage, and most opposite to the common Notions of Liberty; and yet at the same time he supposes us free, and every Deviation from this Service not to be Liberty, but Vice and Servitude usurping that Name. As it is therefore a Point of considerable Importance in

SERM. Reason and Divinity to give it what Light I  
 XI. can, I shall

*First*, Enquire into the true Nature of Liberty, in order to prove that it is not another Thing from the Service of God.

*Secondly*, Shew that God has most effectually provided for the Liberty of Man by the Dispensation of the Gospel; and,

*Lastly*, Point out some of the Abuses which have arisen from a Liberty ill understood, and wrong applied to countenance real Slavery, a corrupted Mind and Heart.

Under one or other of these Heads will, I think, be comprehended the whole Force of the Doctrine deliver'd by St. Peter in the Words of my Text; *As free, and not using your Liberty for a Cloak of Maliciousness, but as the Servants of God.*

*First*, I am to enquire into the true Nature of Liberty. Under Liberty I comprehend that of the Thought as well as the outward Action; and, indeed, as all the Motives

to



to Action are supplied from the Thought, SERM.  
from our own Reason or Sense, (which I XI.  
shall frequently call by the general Name of  
Understanding) from our own Understand-  
ing, I say, or from a Faith in the Under-  
standing of others, from Love or Hatred,  
Hopes or Fears, &c. *i. e.* from Thought of  
one kind or other, a Liberty of Thought will  
of course draw the other after it, and may  
therefore in reasoning safely enough stand for  
them both.

Now, in the first place, no considering  
Man, I suppose, will claim such a Liberty  
whereby he shall be able to deny his Consent  
to the clearest Evidence of Reason, the most  
unexceptionable Testimony of Sense or Faith,  
and the strongest Motives of Action; inso-  
much, that where a Thing is proved true, he  
shall be free still to think it false, in Opposi-  
tion to his own Lights; to disbelieve a thing  
which to himself carries every Appearance of  
Credit; to do this when every Motive of Ac-  
tion determines him to the contrary. One can  
hardly express this so gently, but the Contra-  
diction shews itself through it; for it would



SERM. be really to judge against his own Judgment,  
 XI. to believe against his own Belief, and to do  
 that which he cannot do.

Such a whimsical Liberty, if there be any such, is certainly no Privilege to human Nature, much less is it that which our blessed Redeemer has purchased for us. It is true, that we frequently judge amiss, believe and act wrong, but still it is always conformably to our own Reasons and Motives: Nor is this any Imperfection in our Nature that we are obliged to conclude rightly from our own Reasons, to act consistently with our own Motives; far from it: But here lies our Misfortune, that we either don't know or don't attend to other greater Reasons and more prevailing Motives, which would lead us another Way.

Nor therefore can Liberty consist in a perpetual Suspension of the Mind, where the Soul feels itself equally ballanced, and indifferent to this or that Judgment, to this Action or the contrary. Something like this hath been advanced in Philosophy, and elsewhere, but ever very unhappily, and in the utmost  
 Defiance

Defiance to Nature and right Reason. Sometimes we find ourselves mistaken in our Conclusions, our Senses frequently have misrepresented Things, we have believed and been deceived, our Passions have misled us. All this is true; but our Reason, our Sense, our Faith, our Passions, are they therefore to be wholly discarded? or, which comes to the same, must not we, for fear of being deceived, ever venture to give them any Trust?

If this Reasoning be right, the Administration of God, from the Beginning of the World to this Day, hath been wrong; for Mankind has ever trusted them, and by this Trust have all the great Ends of Providence been carried on. They have sometimes been misled by them, and from thence the World has rightly concluded that they are not to be absolutely trusted: For every Instance of Deception there is naturally an Allowance given, and a Drawback made upon that Fulness of Assent; it puts a Weight into the opposite Scale: But it ought not therefore to overcome or equal the weightier Truth that lies on the other Side. As well might we say that an

SERM.

XI.

SERM. Ounce ought to counterpoise a Pound, or  
 XI. that Ten should be no more than One.

The Inclination therefore of the Soul to close with an Object offer'd to it, ought not to be always ballanced, but, as it is, always check'd by the Error on the other Side, in exact Proportion to its Moment. And so little Reason have we, upon the Account of some accidental Mistakes, to mistrust the Truth of the Faculties themselves, that one great Way of discovering and correcting an Error is from the superior Truth of them: We know that we see sometimes wrong, because we generally see right.

Sometimes indeed the Mind ought to be suspended, and there the Wisdom of God has provided it shall be so; as where the Object is at a distance, and half out of Sight: And thus the Reason and the Faith have their Bounds, at the Extremities of which Things appear obscure and confused. But because the Eye cannot clearly discern a Man a great way off, must I therefore doubt the Existence of a Precipice just before my Feet? Because I know not what to believe of an ancient Fact obscurely mention'd, and  
 without

without any Consequence, must I therefore SERM.  
preserve myself suspended in a Matter of the XI.  
utmost Moment, and which has left behind  
it the deepest Traces?

In Things uncertain and of little Importance it is ridiculous to be positive; but in Things of the greatest Importance and the highest Certainty, it is not only ridiculous, but fatal to be doubtful. If there were no Medium to be chosen, but we must either be always positive or doubtful in every Thing, it were better to be exposed to Ridicule than to Ruin; and this we should soon perceive, did we once feel the distracted and forlorn State of an everlasting Perplexity. This, as the greatest of all Evils, Nature has strongly guarded against, but yet is sometimes felt by some dark unhappy Souls.

But if this be Liberty, Demonstration is the greatest Enslaver in the World; for that absolutely determines the Mind to one Point, and leaves no Power to doubt, *i. e.* as the Reason is more perfected, so the Mind is more enslaved, and perfect Knowledge (such as we conceive to be in the Deity) is absolute Slavery.

This

SERM.

XL

This therefore not being the Liberty which we are seeking after, we must enquire farther. Is it then a Power to think and act for ourselves without any Interposition from abroad? a Right to yield to no Reasons or Motives but those of our own Growth? Where there is infinite Knowledge, and nothing wanting upon which a Judgment may be form'd, there evidently the Mind is qualified to judge for itself: Where all possible Motives that ought to determine an Action have their just Weight, there the Action ought to be perfectly free and uncontroul'd, *i. e.* to a Perfection of Nature there is, there must be, there ought to be, no foreign Controul or Influence. This Liberty is the Prerogative of God.

But where the Mind, such as is the human, is bounded within a narrow Compass, and consequently every Judgment and every Action want infinite Things to give them Perfection, it is evident that the Mind must want so much Right to this Liberty as it wants Perfection; and who can tell us how large is that dark Chasm of the Soul? what

Reasons



Reasons lie conceal'd in that vast Region **SERM.**  
where we know nothing? **XI.**

Well then, since our Understanding is of itself bounded, could it by any means be enlarged, would the Man lose so much Liberty as he has gained Improvement? is he less free to think for himself as he has received a larger Influx of Knowledge from abroad? No, thus far, considering that all this Knowledge thus transplanted into him is as it were naturalized and blended with his original self; he owns no Master, and his Thoughts are his own: Perhaps he'll acknowledge himself more free as he is less confined.

And a great deal may be done this way, towards enlarging the Understanding and the Liberty of Man. Great are the Benefits of Company, Books, Discourses; vast is the Advantage we receive from a liberal Education, which opens to us a new World of Men and Things: How much do we owe to the Address of a skilful Master, who with a fine Hand forms the tender Soul, dextrously delivers the labouring Youth of his own Notions, is ever insinuating and distilling something

SERM. something from himself, and sows those Seeds

XI. of Knowledge in the Mind, which, when  
 ~~~~~ long after they are grown to Perfection, sometimes make the vain Man proud of himself, and able to despise the Hand from whence they came? To say all, our excellent Constitution, the common Mother that first bore us, and has since fed us, to whose wise Provision we are indebted for these and all other Advantages, how much of us may she justly claim? Were we to see the Nakedness of that Mind, which was stripp'd of all those foreign Assistances, and left barely to his own Acquirements, it would teach us to think Modestly of ourselves, and with all Respect and Gratitude of others.

But it may be we are sensible of this; we would gladly accept to have our Understanding improved, and our Eyes open'd thro' all this infinite Complication of Things, that we might be as Gods, every one for himself able infallibly to discern Good and Evil. This is what the Pride of Man hath been ever aiming at, but in vain; for we can no more be made Gods than be born so. There
 are

are established Bounds, beyond which the utmost Improvement cannot carry us ; there will be still beyond all the Knowledge we can possess, infinite room for Ignorance, and consequently a great Void unprovided for : However, after all, if Man can go no further, we must make the best Use of what can be had, and Liberty will consist in doing as we can, and judging as we are able from our own Abilities, improved by the best Instruction.

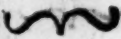
But suppose that where I can see nothing myself, there another shall see something which concerns me ; shall I, because by the Supposition I can't be made to see it with my own Eyes, shall I therefore stily maintain my Liberty of seeing for myself, and refuse his Assistance ? this is in some Degree the Case of every two Men in the World, where the Capacity is upon the whole equal, yet from a different Position of the Understanding they shall either see what the other cannot. Where there is a Difference in Men, this will create a proportionable Difference on either Side in the Reasoning ; but we'll now suppose

SERM. suppose them nearly on a level, none to understand perfectly, and yet every one to see something, tho' with some Difference.

XI.

Here it is plain, that if great Regard is to be had to my Understanding, a great Regard is due to the Understanding of another; if another's have but little Weight, mine can have no more: It is so contrived, that whatever Notion we have of the Human Capacity, we can never want a Check proportion'd to it. Be the Understanding of Man ever so much magnified, we ought to magnify it alike; and not, as is often seen, say very great and magnificent Things of Reason, and in the Conclusion take the whole Benefit of it to ourselves; many times in Defiance to the Reason of the whole World. Such are in Truth pleading not for Reason, but for private Reason; and not for that neither, for every Man's is such, but for their own against that of the World and of every single Man in it.

We ought therefore, if we talk fairly and consistently, to give the same Advantage to others which we claim to ourselves, and a much greater still to the united Sense of Societies

cieties and Kingdoms of Men. And if this SERM.
be true, it is right to acknowledge it for XL
Truth, to allow it a proper Weight with us 
in Judgment and Practice; and hence arises
a Faith which gives us all the Benefit of the
Understanding of others; by our own Un-
derstanding we see with our own Eyes, and
by a Faith in the Understanding of others,
we see with the Eyes of others too: And
this is a very gracious Provision which God
Almighty has made to supply the necessary
Deficiency of one Man out of the Abun-
dance of many.

But others, it will be said, may deceive
us. Societies of Men can no more deceive
themselves, than single Persons; and there-
fore the Supposition is absurd of whole Com-
munities dissembling, of all Mankind play-
ing the Hypocrite: To whom or for what
Reason should they do it? One Man indeed
may deceive another, one Set or Society of
Men may deceive another Set or Society;
sometimes they do so; and this, as I said be-
fore, will require an Abatement to be made;
which accordingly the World makes, with-
out destroying the Truth of Faith, and the
Advan-

SERM. Advantage to be had from it: An Advantage
 XI. so great, that the Good of all Society and Government depends upon it. For if Mankind in forming Societies were supposed to club together in creating a prodigious Power only, and placing it somewhere without an Understanding proportioned to it, Government would be a greater Monster than any that the Poets talk of, an enormous Strength join'd unnaturally to a small Understanding.

But it is not so: Things are better ordered upon the whole; for I am not talking of the Corruption of particular Times: No Man can shew why a Union of Understanding should not have the same Advantage as a Union of Power. Hence it is that the Subject naturally comes into the Sense of his Superiors, to a certain Degree, as far as it is reasonable he should, and by that means enjoys the Wisdom of the Administration at the same time that he is supported by its Power. Thus, in a Father, a superior Understanding is cloathed in a Portion of Power exactly suited to it; the Child, if his Soul be rightly form'd, is bless'd with a native Sense of his own Imperfection, which wisely disposes him

to

to submit not only his outward Behaviour, SERM.
but his very Sense and Judgment to a certain XI.
Degree. The Submission of the one corre-
sponds exactly to the Authority of the other,
and the Reason for that Authority; the
Laws of Family are maintain'd; Order and
Harmony preserved; and the Child by this
wise Conduct of Providence has all the Be-
nefit of the greater Knowledge and Power
of the Father.

It is very reasonable then, we'll now sup-
pose, to possess a certain Degree of Faith,
by which we are kindly incorporated into
the general Understanding of Mankind, and
enjoy the Benefit of it. But as this Faith
is an Act of Obedience, whereby the Under-
standing of every Man does in some sort bow
and pay Homage to a foreign Authority, it
seems that this can't be done without Preju-
dice to Liberty, that native Sovereignty which
we all claim over ourselves.

But what then is Liberty? Is it that
trifling Thing mentioned at first, a Power to
be deceived, to chuse Error where Truth ap-
pears, to refuse to see a Benefit where there

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is

SERM. is one? No surely this is either not at all, or
 XI. not a Privilege to be insisted on. True Liberty is not a Power to reason truly or falsely, to do right or wrong, but a Power to do right and to reason truly, when the Understanding is dis-encumber'd from every Cloud, and free to give to every Truth its due Moment; and, if there be a Truth and Benefit carried in Authority, we are not clogg'd by any undue Opinion of ourselves from seeing and enjoying it. Truth is the Liberty of the Mind which only can set it free.

It would be childish here to say, what yet is commonly said, that we must follow our own Judgments, we must believe and act according to our own Opinion of Things and not another's. It is childish, I say, not because it is not true, but because it is nothing to the Purpose, for he that carries the Authority of Man ever so high, even to Infallibility, still follows his own Judgment in it, it is agreeable to his Opinion to place Infallibility where he places it: But is he therefore free? Yes, he is, in this Sense, in which every one must be so; he follows his own Judgment. But at the same time his Judgment

ment is close fetter'd, his Understanding is **SERM.**
depress'd and overborn by the Weight of **XI.**
Human Authority, which he carries too
high.

A Man is not free therefore because he judges according to his own Reason, for this he always does when he reasons ever so absurdly; nor because he acts according to his own Motives, for this he always does when he acts ever so monstrously: but then only, as I said before, he is free to Perfection, when nothing hinders him from Judging and Acting according to Truth. I conclude therefore upon the Strength of what is past that Faith in Man, or which is the same, Submission to Authority to a certain Degree, far from enslaving the Mind, helps to set it free.

But still an absolute Faith and an absolute Obedience neither Father, Master, Priest, Magistrate, nor any Name of Authority upon Earth can claim, it being the Prerogative of God only, who can no more communicate such a Right, than he can communicate his own infinite Being; I mean an absolute Right without Limitation, which can be only

SERM. due to Wisdom and Power without Bounds;
 XI. but these Qualifications are in Man but to a
 certain Point only. After all the Use of our
 own most improved Understanding, strengthen'd by the concurrent Sense of Nations of Men, yet still the Soul requires an Assurance which nothing below God can give it.

He alone that sees the Whole is capable of judging surely of any one Part, because of those infinite Relations which every single Thing bears to all others. Every Action draws its Principles from innumerable Causes, and spreads its Consequences in different Proportions into all Futurity; all which none but God himself sees, or is capable of seeing. In this Maze of Things, inextricable to us, would he in infinite Goodness vouchsafe to lead us by the Hand, teach us what to think and what to do, then only we might hope to find Rest to our Souls. But this cannot be done by any Application to the Understanding of Man, which, for Reasons mention'd before, is absolutely incapable of receiving it.

Suppose then that he, perfectly seeing all those infinite Relations which lie dispersed over
 the

the Face of Things, and weighing their several SERM.
Moments, and with divine Art compound- XI.
ing them together, should give us a Rule of
Life which resulted from all these, and in
like manner should give us the Force of all
these infinite Consequences comprehended in
one expressive Word of Heaven or Hell; this
alone, it's evident, would fill up all our De-
ficiencies, and give us all the Perfection that
human Nature will admit: But it is impos-
sible to enjoy the Benefit of this divine Gui-
dance any other way than by Faith. We
must believe (know it we cannot) that this
is a most perfect Rule, and submit to be go-
vern'd by it, or we must of necessity forfeit
all the Advantage to be received from it.

To compleat the System, therefore, we
must suppose it to come recommended to our
Faith with such Evidences and Testimonies
as are proper Grounds for it, insomuch that
it shall be impossible to believe any thing at
all, consistently, without believing that; in
other Words, we must renounce all Faith, or
have Faith in God; and this is the high
Claim which our Religion makes, and from
whence it necessarily follows that the Service

SERM. of God is perfect Freedom, because by the
 XI. Supposition above made in acting upon this
 Principle, we act upon a Perfection of Reason, a Perfection of Faith, and a Perfection of every Motive that can or ought to influence us.

It is plain, by this Deduction of Liberty, that were our own Understanding infinitely perfect and self-sufficient, to be wholly govern'd by that would be perfect Liberty; that Faith becomes reasonable only, as it is a Supplement to the Deficiency of our Understanding, and consequently that the Liberty which arises from Faith is only a Supplemental Liberty to remedy the Deficiency of that first and highest Liberty which belongs to God only. But as long as our Understanding is necessarily defective, so long will Faith be necessary to give us Perfection, such a Perfection as is consistent with Humanity; and so long will the Liberty of Man consist in the Obedience of a Divine Faith, or, which is the same, in the Service of God.

So

So that it now appears, that true Liberty and the Service of God are the same thing under two different Considerations: If you ascend from the Reason of Man, and consider the Faith and Obedience which we owe to Men within certain Bounds, and to God absolutely as reasonable Things, in this View Faith and Obedience are Points of Reason, and consequently we are govern'd by Reason only, *i. e.* we are wholly free. On the other hand, in beginning from God and his Laws directed to the Faith, every Thing assumes another Form, comes to us under the Notion of Duty, and even the Exercise of Reason itself is bound upon us by the Authority of this supreme Law-giver, and makes Part of the Service which he requires of us.

And accordingly the Holy Scriptures often direct us to consider Things in both these Views, and wisely make use of them for a Controul one upon the other. We are there taught to call Religion the Service of God; but lest that Expression should lead us to imagine in it something servile and illiberal, we are given to understand that these Servants of God are

SERM. the only Men in the World that are indeed

XI. free : We are called to Liberty ; but lest that

Word might be dangerously interpreted to countenance Licentiousness, or Maliciousness, or Pride, &c. the Apostle happily controuls it in the Words of my Text, where we are allow'd to be free yet as the Servants of God. I come now to the

Second Thing I propos'd, which was to shew that God has most effectually provided for the Liberty of Man, by the Dispensation of the Gospel. It can't be supposed that in Part of a Discourse, so noble a Subject should have all its Strength ; I can only have time to consider it in one Light, to which I am directed by the Account of Liberty before given. I shall compare this Foolishness of God, as the *Greeks* thought it, in applying to the Faith of Mankind, in order to procure them Liberty ; I shall compare it, I say, with the Wisdom of Men, who have chosen to address themselves to the Reason.

Give me leave now again to mention in gross (for I need not distinguish accurately) four Principles of Thought and Action with-

in

in us; the Reason, the Sense, the Faith, and the Passions; shall I add a Fifth, which whether indiscernably compounded in whole or in part from a Mixture of these, or whether it be something wholly inexplicable to us, operates upon us when we do Things we know not why, from a sudden Emotion or a secret Turn of Mind unknown to ourselves? This, if in a Matter of Concern, is in the Language of the *Greeks* *δαίμωνιον*, or *δαίμων*; in the Christian Scheme, which refers every Thing to its first Principles, it is an Inspiration from God, or an Infusion of the Devil; in the gay easy Stile of the World, it is Humour and Caprice, and we know not what.

I have said already that we are subject to be misled sometimes by every one of these Principles; that this requires of course some Abatement to be made in our Assent to them, which therefore we are naturally disposed to make according to the Proportion which the Errors of every kind bear to their respective Faculty; and all this without calling in question the Truth of the Faculties themselves: This the Bulk of Mankind uncorrupted never do, who receive with all Simplicity those Operations

SERM.
XI.
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SERM. rations of Nature as they are intended by

XI. God: These are the Refinements of speculative Men who would substitute their own Wisdom in the room of the Divine. What Errors there were, I said, were of course corrected by the superior Truth of the Faculty respectively; and I add now, that the Errors in one Faculty are controul'd by the Truth in another, in such a manner that they are all mutual Checks one upon the other. It happens frequently that a Mistake arises in the Sense, which is convicted by the Reason or the Faith; in another Instance, Reason will submit to the Conviction of Sense or Faith; and again, Faith yields in its Turn. Uncorrupted Nature knows when and how far this mutual Submission is fit better than all the Reasoning in the World.

The great Difficulty is where any two Faculties in Perfection clash. Suppose a clear Evidence of Sense to be combated by the whole Strength of Faith, *i. e.* suppose I clearly see one Thing, and all Mankind affirm that they see another, I don't decide which shall carry it; but from the whole I draw this Conclusion, that as they all alike stand
upon

upon a Bottom of Truth, and are all alike **SERM.**
subject to accidental Errors, no one of them **XI.**
is to be enslaved to the other; neither are the
Decisions of Reason to dictate absolutely to
Sense, nor those of Sense to Reason, nor
Faith to either.

Now here has lain the Folly of Philosophers, those Innovators of Nature, who observing the Mistakes of Sense and Faith, and how frequently our Passions hurry us out of the Way, have taken Occasion from hence to deify the Reason, and have paid all those Compliments to the Reason of Man, which are only due to Reason in Perfection, or the Reason of God. And upon this wrong Principle they argue as all Mad-men do, very consistently that our Perfection consists in the Cultivation of Reason, that nothing is true or carries any Authority but what can approve itself to the Reason; the Reports of Sense are nothing, the Opinion of Mankind is nothing, no Faith or Obedience is due any where but to Reason: The Passions are therefore to be utterly rooted out, because the Wise-man in following them
does

SERM. does not explicitly see the Reason: A Father, a Master, a Magistrate, are Names that
 XI. signify nothing in Truth, because they are to be obey'd no further than they are consistent with Reason, by which he means the Reason in himself. He is therefore absolute Lord of himself, he is every Thing, because nothing is any Thing with him any further than it is Reason; he is the only Free-man, he is a King, he is God.

I know very well that all Philosophers don't carry the Matter so high; but where they stop short of this, they fall short of the Principle which I am combating. If they condescend to accept any Benefit from Government, from Religion, from the Passions, it is stolen from another Principle than what they profess; for every Thing that has been said follows consistently upon a Perfection of Reason; Government can be of no use where the Man is absolutely qualified to govern himself. To love or hate, to hope or fear, would but disturb the serene State of perfect Reason.

See now what follows: With infinite Labour and Struggle against Nature, he has at
 last

last gone near to break all these 10000 un-
seen Channels, by which infinite Wisdom
had contrived to join one Thing to another,
and preserve a mutual Communication be-
tween the several Parts; those mysterious Li-
gaments wrought with the most curious
Workmanship that tie the Father to the Son,
the Husband to the Wife, the Magistrate to
the Subject, the Body to the Soul; that
Charm of Nature by which every Thing ap-
pears either lovely or great, or holy amongst
Men. And now behold the Wise-man placed
in the midst of a beautiful World as in a
vast Wilderness, cut off from all Communica-
tion with it, and perfectly free. He looks all
round him, and sees Mankind acting upon
quite other Principles, seeing and hearing
and believing, loving and beloved, honour-
ing and being honoured, *i. e.* in his Sense
all trifling and playing the Fool in different
Roads: he laughs at all those Amusements,
the World is nothing for him, and perhaps,
to shew the last Disregard to it, the brave
Man kills himself and leaves it; the most
dreadful State of Mind to which God can
possibly abandon an unhappy Man! he is
then

SERM. then become insupportable to himself; nothing but Darkneſs and Deſolation.

XI.

And in Proportion, as he appears a God to himſelf, he muſt of neceſſity throw off his Reverence for the real God of the Univerſe, whoſe Adminiſtration in human Affairs from one End to the other is diametrically oppoſite to his Scheme; all Regard for Men whom he conſiders as poor contemptible Wretches of a lower Species than himſelf, if his Reaſon prompts him to take care of them, 'tis under the ſame Notion that we provide for our Horſes or Dogs, or any Domeſtick Animal: if, to avoid the Odium of the People, he ſeems to put on their Notions in Religion or Government, and makes a Profeſſion of Courteſy and Reſpect to Mankind, then his Life is all one Lie and Inconſiſtency; for what Principle of his can ſupport ſuch an Eſteem? Nor can he act this Part ſo well but that the publick Eye diſcerns through it, his Pride and Irreligion.

Theſe are the fatal Conſequences of Reaſon indulg'd to exceſs, and not temper'd by the Reſpect we owe to our other Faculties, to the World, and to God. And if theſe
Conſe-

Consequences don't always appear full grown, SERM.
it is because Men (as I said before) are hap- XI.
pily inconsistent with their Principle. Reason is of great Use, as it is employ'd in correcting the Excesses, and rectifying the wrong Use of our Sense, our Faith, or our Passions; but in return, it does itself as much, full as much, need the salutary Check which it receives from them.

Suppose now, that the reasoning Man, after having destroy'd or enfeebled those natural Inclinations, shall at length come to perceive that they, together with the Prepossessions which of course attend them, tho' not distinctly and explicitly seen by us, are yet really Compendiums (if I may so call them) of Reason, the Results and Conclusions of the highest Wisdom which God has wrought into our Natures. Suppose therefore, that now he shall begin to think it proper to restore them: He has destroy'd the natural Love which he bore to his Children; let him try to create it again by force of Reasoning. He would not accept of Meat and Drink as Nature prepared him for it by a Stomach, by that hidden Enchantment of Hunger and Thirst;

SERM. Thirst; his Reason must be satisfied; it is

XI. satisfied: Will all the Logick of Man give it
 again the Perfection with which the Wisdom
 of God had wrought it? The same is true
 in Government and Religion; it is dangerous
 to meddle with the Foundations of Nature;
 he has cut the Knots, and it is impossible for
 him, even when he sees the utmost Reason
 for it, to tie them again.

He complains of Prejudices which enslave
 the Mind: And indeed on all Sides, which
 Way ever we look, we see nothing else; Na-
 ture does almost all her Work by Prejudices;
 Prejudices for Religion; Prejudices for Vir-
 tue, for our Country, for our Family: These
 Prejudices may obstruct his Reason perhaps,
 and it is highly fit they should, but they are
 the Reason of God. If these Prejudices are
 wrong applied, as they sometimes are, let
 him give a Reason that shall be strong enough
 to overcome them: This is the proper Use of
 Reason; but let him not complain of Preju-
 dice in the whole, and pretend to set us at
 liberty from one of the wisest and kindest
 Laws of God, which directly flows from the
 most essential Affections of human Nature.

If

If we talk of Reason in Perfection, as I **SERM.**
said before, and the Liberty that belongs to **XI.**
it, all those Things are useless and absurd Incumbrances upon it, and we had nothing to do but to destroy them all as soon as possible. But as Reason is in Man imperfect, and but one Thing among others fully as essential, the true Liberty of Man must consist in the proper ballancing of one of these against another. This is the Artifice of Nature, this the Wisdom of God; by infinite Checks and Controuls we are kept from bursting out on any Side: Did we want any one of these, some other would want its Counterpoise, and soon shew itself by something monstrous and irregular. The best, the wisest of us all, can he answer for himself what he should have been, if he had not been happily under those wholesome Restraints, which are so many that every Man in the World is in some measure a Check upon us? All these therefore, bound close upon us by that strong Brace of the Authority of God, which alone can keep the whole firm and unhurt, constitute the Happiness, the Perfection, and the Liberty of Man: And this is the Plan of our most
B b holy

SERM. holy Religion. Why have not I Time to

XI. say what might be easily said upon this glorious Theme?

By the Account that has been given of Liberty, it is easily seen where our Slavery lies: We may be enslaved to our own Reason, when, not knowing its Bounds, it plays the Tyrant within us, and begets a secret and extravagant Pride, odious to God and Man, and even insufferable to ourselves. We may be enslaved to our Sense when we are so wholly possess'd by present Objects that we can't give to absent Things the Regard which they justly demand from us. Our Faith may enslave us, and does so when we give too much to the Authority of Man, by placing in him Infallibility, and an absolute Right to Obedience. Our Passions enslave us when we either love or hate, hope or fear enormously, and beyond the true Proportion of the Objects about which they are employ'd; and, lastly, which was the fifth thing mention'd some time since, we may be enslaved to some unknown Principles, which may hurry and bewitch us into all manner of Extrava-

travagancies. From this Slavery of every kind the Son of God has effectually set us free by the Obedience of Faith, and by that has justly merited the high Title of the Saviour and Redeemer of Mankind.

SERM.

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We now suppose the Truths and Duties of the Gospel dictated by God to be the same which our own Reason, were it perfect, would prescribe to us, resulting from an infinite View of Things laid together, and exhibited to the Faith. The Reason has the same Perfection in itself as if it were our own, but it is the Reason of God: Every thing that we do upon this Principle is absolutely perfect, but it is a Perfection which is the Gift and Grace of God: Virtue is no longer in this View a Creature of our own, a Thing to be proud of, but to be thankful for; *i. e.* it is Virtue join'd with Humility and the Love of God. Considering the Imperfection of our Reason, whatever we do from that only, must necessarily retain the Imperfection of its Fountain, can be done but with Half-views, and cannot possibly be compleated but upon the Christian Scheme. Hence it

SERM. is that Jesus Christ, through whom the whole

XI. Grace of God is convey'd to Man, is the
 ~~~~~ Light and the Truth which only can set us  
 free : He came not to destroy Reason, for he  
 is Reason itself substantiated, but to fulfill  
 and compleat it; and by taking off all the  
 Pride and Tyranny of it, to render it dutiful  
 to God, and conversible with Men.

He has rescued us from the excessive Power  
 of the Sense, not by disputing the Reality of  
 its Perceptions, for he address'd his Person,  
 his Miracles, and his Discourses to it; but by  
 opening to its View a larger Scene, and teach-  
 ing it to form its Judgment not from a nar-  
 row Compass that was perpetually shifting,  
 but from an immense World of Things that  
 continued the same. And thus whereas, if  
 we had been left wholly under the Guidance  
 of our Sense, we should have changed our  
 Measures with every Change of Prospect,  
 being firmly anchor'd (if I may so say) in  
 that eternal State, we are preserved steady in  
 all the Fluctuations of this World.

The same may be said with regard to the  
 Passions, which, far from rooting out, he has  
 only

only directed towards their proper Objects. SERM.  
He has found out the Secret of overcoming XI.  
the World through the same Avenues by  
which it formerly overcame us. We are al-  
low'd still to love and hope Good, to fear  
Evil of every Kind ; but he has pointed those  
Passions towards the Place where all the Treas-  
ures of Good and Evil are laid up. He has  
found an Object for them exactly commen-  
surate to them. Whatever Reason we have  
to love the World, we have still more to love  
God, because that very Reason, together with  
every other that can possibly create Love, is  
comprehended in him. Heaven is not some-  
thing wholly different from the Happiness we  
enjoy here, but it is the Sum of all Happi-  
ness, in which this is consider'd according to  
its Proportion. The Terrors that this World  
can offer to us are no otherwise different from  
those of the other, than as these are but some  
Streamings from an Ocean, some Tinctures  
of Evil from that Cup which is in the Hand  
of the Lord.

It has offended the Delicacy of a fine Au-  
thor of the present Age, that God should  
have any thing in him that can create Fear,

SERM. not considering enough that it is fit that God  
XI. should have in every thing the Pre-eminence.

~~~~~ To our Reason he is the first Truth; he is the first Article of our Faith; to our Love he is supremely amiable, and to our Fear, being offended, he ought to be the most terrible of all Things. Since we possess all these Faculties, he must possess something that shall perfectly answer to them all. Were we indeed wholly destitute of this Passion of Fear, God might safely want those Attributes that affect it; but since we have it, and must have it as long as we have any Notion of Evil, shall we fear every Thing but God, be afraid of offending Man, and not afraid of offending God? Shall our Reason, our Faith, our Love, draw us towards him, and our Fear be set at loose to frighten us from him? In such a Case, considering the Predominancy of this Passion in our Nature, who can answer for the Consequence?

But as Things are order'd, every Principle within us is carried to Perfection, and taught by our Religion to act in Concert, whilst our Reason in the Cause of God triumphs over the weaker Reasons which would appear to
combat

combat him, and our Faith in God over-comes the weaker Portions of Faith which we place in Men; our Love and Fear of God lead in Captivity the smaller Loves and Fears which we employ on the Creature, and all together join their Forces in one Direction in supporting the Prerogative of God, and the Happiness and Liberty of Man.

SERM.

XL

If it were a Breach upon our Liberty to fear God, if it were mercenary to hope for Heaven, yet, if we must hope and fear at all, certainly those Passions can never be so rightly applied as here: We can never serve with more Honour, nor for a more noble Reward; but when we consider that those same Things, which, as they are proposed to our Hopes and Fears, carry the Notions of Recompence, are in a way of Reason everlasting and necessary Consequences of our well or evil doing, thus we no longer act from a View of Recompence, but from the highest Reason; thus God no longer threatens nor rewards, but only mercifully reveals to us the necessary Fruit of our Doings, and gives us to act with perfect Liberty.

SERM. As to our Faith, besides what has been
XI. said already, I ought to shew, and was prepared to do it, that God has the same Advantage with regard to Faith as every other where; that he is supremely intitled to it, as well as to the Acknowledgment of our Reason, that the Foundations of it are as perfect in their kind, and that it is fully as impossible to withstand the Evidences; and consequently that to disbelieve here, argues as monstrous and as dangerous a Depravity in its kind as to reason wrong; that as in Reasoning to deny the Existence of Deity secretly undermines all Reason, and leaves it without Foundation, so it is impossible to assign a Foundation for any Faith at all, if the Faith of Deity be destroy'd. I should have shew'd, that he has the same supreme Advantage in speaking to the Faith of Mankind, that the Testimony of God is of necessity greater than the Testimony of Man, and that Christianity has this Testimony of God, and therefore that we can deny our Faith to it upon no Principles but what will much more strongly conclude against believing any thing at all.

But

But all this being suppos'd, because I cannot now enter into the Proof of it, I shall only now observe, that here especially seems to be center'd the Notion of Christian Liberty; that by this Faith in God all smaller Considerations are absorbed in that Perfection of Reason which is carried in this divine Faith. In the Christian Scheme we honour and obey our Parents and Governors in Obedience to God. The Authority of God, at the same time that it binds upon us the Duties which we owe to Men, limits them, and makes them Part of that first and comprehensive Duty which we owe to God, and so effectually guards against the Excess into which otherwise they might run.

They are much mistaken, however, who think that this is to be done by destroying Reason and natural Affections, and the Authority of Man, and substituting in their room this Obedience to God. We should make but coarse Work of it, did we eat and drink, and love our Children, and obey our Parents or Magistrates for no Reason, but with an explicit View to God only: No, those very Affections, the Exercise of our Reason,

SERM.
XI.

SERM. Reason, Submission to Authority, within
 XI. their proper Bounds, are all Part of that
 ~~~~~ Obedience which we owe to God: To give  
 to the Poor from a Compassion or Generosity of Temper, as far as those Affections are right, is as much Obedience to God as if we gave ever so much with a View to the Command; for these are all the Laws of God, and, far from being destroy'd by the Christian Law, receive a new Sanction from it. We must now honour our Parents, and be obedient to Authority, not only for the Reason that is carried in those natural Dispositions, not only from the Reasonableness of the Thing itself, as it appears to us, both which Arguments yet are very great, but from the Command of God signified to our Faith, *i. e.* for other Reasons unknown to us, which fill up what was defective in our own, and constitute, as I have said before, the Christian Perfection and Liberty. We must love Man still, but we must love God more; we must obey Man, but we must obey God rather.

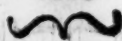
Lastly, Upon the Christian Scheme we are freed from the Tyranny of that unknown  
 Prin-

Principle within us, which unrestrain'd hur-  
ries and bewitches us into the greatest Extra-  
vagancies. Not only many of our Actions  
are wholly unaccountable, but there is some-  
thing unaccountable in all of them. There  
is every where a Mixture of this unknown,  
which therefore we are greatly concern'd to  
guard against. This, as it betrays us to Evil,  
is, in the Language of the sacred Writings,  
the Devil, the Father and Author of all Evil,  
Evil itself impersonated, Evil alive, vigilant,  
crafty, insinuating, malicious; the most per-  
fect Object of that Fear which is join'd with  
Hatred that all Nature can furnish, for it  
comprehends every thing that is shocking  
and detestable.

This dreadful Being, the Jest of little-  
minded Men, is represented ever busy in in-  
fusing Evil, and poisoning our Good; his  
invisible Arrows are for ever flying abroad,  
and no way to be repell'd but by the Shield  
of Faith. This Shield covers all that Part  
of us that we must of necessity leave expo-  
sed; the Danger here does by the Suppositi-  
on lie without the Precincts of any human  
Caution, and nothing but an invisible Affis-  
tance

SERM.

XI.



SERM. tance can guard us against an unseen Enemy.

XI. Our Security therefore lies in this, that he that is in us, is stronger than he that is in the World. We must be sensible of our own Insufficiency, and rest ourselves under the Shadow of the Almighty, who we are taught firmly to believe is able and willing to protect us; and this only Charm will most effectually secure us.

I shall have said all, in an imperfect Manner, that I can now be allow'd to say concerning the Advantage of Faith, by which the Wisdom of God has chosen to set us free beyond the Reason of Man, when I have just added this Observation, that if Reason only could give us Liberty, but some very few could be free, a Philosopher here and there, and all the rest of the World must lie under Bondage unredeemable, and in fact no considerable Part of Mankind has ever been influenced this Way; but by this Method of Faith Jesus Christ is qualified to be the Redeemer of all Mankind, the Great and Small, the Scholar and the Unlearn'd, Man and Woman being equally susceptible of the  
Grounds

*On Liberty.*

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Grounds of Faith, and the Grace of God. SERM.  
I proceed, XI.

*Thirdly,* To mention two or three of the Abuses which have arisen from a Liberty ill understood; and the first I shall mention shall be a very early one, where Liberty is abused for an Occasion to the Flesh, *i. e.* is brought to countenance an immoderate Love of present Pleasures, to justify us in departing from the establish'd Ways of Happiness which the Wisdom of God and Man has mark'd out for us. This Notion of Liberty proceeds from the utmost Poverty of Mind; for allowing Liberty to consist in the free Enjoyment of Pleasure (and indeed it can never be separated from it) this is what the Laws of Religion and Government have ever had in view to provide for; one for everlasting Pleasures, the Beatitude and supreme Happiness of Man, *i. e.* absolute Pleasure or absolute Happiness; the other for the Pleasures or Happiness of Life, both which are ordinarily to be found in the same Way. These Rules are form'd, if I may so express myself, upon the most perfect Calculations  
of



SERM. of God and Man, wherein every Pleasure  
 XI. has been duly consider'd and allow'd for.

The Man we are talking of has not a Soul wide enough to take in so large a Compass; a few Years are a Burden too much for him to think on; his Pleasures are the Pleasures of a Month, of a Week, of a Day, or even of a Moment. Hence arises a whole Set of Principles corresponding: Friendship, as it is not founded upon any Views of Life, does not require the Cements of Worth and Virtue, it needs not be made of such lasting Stuff, it is enough that it serves the Purposes of those Pleasures. Justice, Honesty, Humanity, and all publick Virtues are shrivel'd into a kind of Honour, a noble Word corrupted to mean that Bond which ties together such Friends. Hence it is that a most profligate Man may be a very good Friend, he may be a Man of Honour that has given up all Pretensions to common Justice, and one that has thrown off Humanity, and perhaps natural Affection, may still be a generous good-natur'd Man. Hence a plain honest Man, who fulfills all the Duties of Life, is a stupid servile Animal; the Work of Life

is

is the greatest of Drudgeries, except Religion, which proceeds upon Principles still larger, and more removed from his narrow Understanding. SERM. XI.

Now see the Consequence: As Knavery is the Gain of a few Days, but corrupts the Foundation which is to support us throughout, so every unlawful Pleasure eats into the Enjoyments of Life, and sucks out all the Happiness which can render it agreeable. If Pleasure is to be found no where but in those Excesses, what remains of our Time, which must of necessity be far the greater Part, must be Misery and Vexation; if Looseness be Liberty, all the rest must of course be Slavery: And thus this happy, this free Man for a few Hours, is cursed and enslaved for Life, and damn'd for ever.

A Second Abuse of Liberty, is that in my Text, where it is used, in Opposition to Government, to cover a Spirit of Pride, Envy, or Maliciousness. I have said something before to shew that Government, in the general Nature of it, has an Understanding proportion'd to its Power. It is evident that  
whoever

SERM. whoever are call'd by God to this high Office, are by that Call authorized to summon to their Succour the whole Wisdom of a Nation; thither are directed all Petitions, Remonstrances, Counsels from every Member of the State, *i. e.* the Understanding and even Feeling of a People is all center'd there, and comes forth in Laws adapted to the several Occasions and Exigencies which create them. And it is further certain, since Government has received a fresh Accession of Authority by Revelation, that wherever the Sovereign Power and Legislature of a Nation is lodged by God, together with that Portion of Authority he imparts to it, at the same time, by Ways that we can't explain, some Portion of the Spirit of Wisdom to direct its Counsels, for otherwise here would be an Obedience required without a Reason to support it.

Upon this Bottom every Thing is consistent, and we obey Government because it is reasonable to obey it, and consequently according to the Notion of Liberty before laid down, we are free in our Obedience, and really enslaved to something or other when we

refuse

refuse it. Accordingly there has been ever SERM.  
acknowledged something sacred in the Per- XI.  
sons of Princes, a kind of a Divine Cloud  
hovering round their Heads, to which we  
are naturally prompted to pay a Veneration,  
which is upon the whole proportion'd to the  
Reason that supports it.

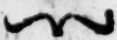
But yet, as it is impossible to suppose on one Side the Grounds of absolute Authority, it is impossible on the other to suppose an absolute Obedience: There are Times when every thing that is human admits Corruption; a Government therefore is sometimes corrupted, and then it becomes the Part of Liberty to withstand the Corruption. The Wisdom of our Constitution has particularly provided that there shall be Controuls upon the Abuse of Power, and, far from doing Wrong, a Representative of the People will betray the Trust reposed in him, if he does not boldly and firmly oppose any Breach upon their Rights, any Innovation that would destroy the just Ballance establish'd between Prince and People.

But at the same time we must not talk for Liberty upon Principles that will destroy all Government, and the Respect that is due to

SERM. it; we must have especial Care that we don't  
 XI. prophane that Name and Cause, by prostitu-  
 ~~~~~ ting it to serve our Pride, or Envy, or Ma-  
 lice. As Government is sometimes corrupted,
 so on the other hand it is no uncommon
 thing to see the proudest and most imperious
 of Men talk loud for Liberty, by which they
 must mean a Liberty to do what they please,
 a Liberty to be Tyrants themselves, and ac-
 cordingly are so, as far as their Power extends
 to their Domesticks and Dependants.

Where there is any reasonable Jealousy of
 Ambition, or Envy, or Resentment, or any
 undue Motive, not all the smart Talk in the
 World for Liberty will go farther than to di-
 vert that little Malice which dwells upon the
 Surface of the Soul against every thing that is
 eminent; it will raise a Laugh and a Jest,
 but it can never move the Ground of the
 Heart. To do that, we want the Man whom
Virgil describes, *Pietate Gravem ac Meritis*;
 he must be free within before he can be qual-
 ified to decide upon the Liberty without.

The third and last Abuse of Liberty that I
 shall mention, shall be in Matters of Reli-
 gion. This is at present the favourite To-
 pick,

pick, to such a degree, that it's hardly safe to SERM.
speak of Liberty with Freedom. By virtue XI.
of this Principle a loose raw Mind, which 
needs all the Bandage of Authority to keep it
tight, is left to its full Swing; and a young
Man, perhaps, yet of an Age in which the
Law wisely won't trust him with the Go-
vernment of himself, thinks himself qualified
to judge decisively upon the Administration
of God, and the Wisdom of Ages; and ac-
cordingly the first Principle he sets out upon,
is to throw off all Authority of God and
Man; his own Reason only shall judge for
him: And thus, without any Examination
at all, he has already determined a Point of
the vastest Importance; a Point so great, that
all the Duties we owe to God and Man de-
pend upon it. For if no Regard is to be
had to the Administration of Things, if no
Faith is due to the general Understanding,
what reasonable Foundation is there left to
support the Honour and Respect, and Obe-
dience that we owe them?

But, perhaps, I do him wrong; it is not
without Examination: He has examined,
and is furnish'd with many Examples of po-
pular Errors and national Absurdities; he can

SERM. be eloquent upon the Blunders and Contradictions of general Councils and Synods, and
 XI. Convocations, &c. And he is so far right, that the wisest of Men are subject to Error, that the largest Assemblies have no just Pretension to Infallibility, because it is absolutely incommunicable to any Creature. The best, the wisest, the greatest Bodies of Men have erred ; and are you then, young Man, infallible ? They have done some Things weakly, but do you all Things wisely ? They have contradicted themselves once or twice in a Century, but don't you many times every Week, or every Day of your Life ? Without all doubt, if Infallibility were to be placed any where, we ought, with the *Romanists*, to place it in the general Sense of Mankind, rather than in the Understanding of every single Man ; for tho' either is absurd, yet this is infinitely more so.

But why must we run mad any way ? Because there is no Infallibility in any Society of Men, is there therefore no Authority, no Weight in their Judgment ? Full as well may we deny any Authority to a Parent or Civil Magistrate, because whole Volumes might be filled with Instances where they have
 com-

commanded wrong. All those Instances, were SERM.
they ten times as many, would not still be XI.
equivalent to that one great Truth which is
contained in the Obedience we pay them.
If we were to enumerate all the Diseases in-
cident to us, it would make a large Cata-
logue, and endless would be the History of
all the Distempers that ever have happen'd;
and yet were we to take Mankind all round,
we should perhaps find a Month's Health to
the Sickness of a Day. So much does the
general Course of Things preponderate the
Exceptions made to it: And thus, in this
Case is the Truth of Authority the general
Course, and the Errors of it Exceptions.

But the Misfortune lies here: A Man hap-
pens to have large Acquaintance in the Vices
of the Town, or the Corruptions of the
Age; thence he gains depraved Notions of
the whole; these he feeds by Companions or
Books, that are ever instilling into him those
Poisons and Deformities of Nature; so that
by the Time he is compleated, were his
Mind to be dissected, it would be found full
fraught with Falshoods, Rogueries, Tricks,
Priest-craft, Hurricane and Confusion. This
is his Idea of Nature, and upon this Bottom

SERM. the Disposition of Mankind to believe and
 XI. obey, must, as it does, appear ridiculous to
 him: For the Affairs of the World go along
 upon a general Supposition of Truth and Ho-
 nesty, and Beauty and Order, and he goes
 upon the Scheme of Falshood, Roguery and
 Confusion. The World supposes a good
 Power presiding, and a wise God directing
 Affairs with as much Perfection as the neces-
 sary Order of Things will admit; the cun-
 ning Man either leaves all at random, or else
 places the Devil at the Head of Things; and
 yet after all, in order to keep some Measures
 with the World, he is forced to cramp his
 Words and Actions to some Conformity
 with it: And which I pray you is the free
 Man? he whose Thinking and Doing go
 hand in hand, both alike obedient to Autho-
 rity, as far as it is reasonable, and no further
 (for thus far only, upon the whole, has God
 disposed Men to obey;) or he whose Thoughts
 and Actions are ever contradictory, who
 would do one Thing, but must do ano-
 ther? *

* This Sermon was spoken no further than to the
 End of this Paragraph.

But

But this Force is the Thing which he complains of; and great Tragedies are rais'd upon the Persecution of Truth, and the Discouragement which Power has put upon Reasoning: If a Thing be reasonable, it will appear so upon a fair Examination; why then is it not left to that Test? And I agree that if we were govern'd by nothing but Reason, all Application ought to be made to that Faculty, and there it has too all imaginable Advantage; but as we are constituted, it ought to have an Advantage as well to every Part of us. See how the Matter stands in God; his Being is the first Truth, and therefore has the greatest Advantage to the Reason of any other, and his Rights consequently are the most reasonable: but does he leave it to that? has he not infinite Power too to support them? and indeed where should Power be used but in the Cause of Truth? Thus at the same time that Truth combats Error, will Power combat the Pride, the Stubbornness, the Perversity of the Passions; and for the same Reason that infinite Truth is join'd with infinite Power, ought every

SERM. Truth to be countenanced by a Power proportion'd to it.
 XI.

To hear some People talk, one would imagine that God had himself given abroad this Truth, but that he had left the Distribution of his Power (the Dignity of this Place won't permit me to speak it full) to any thing else; for how otherwise should it come to pass that Power should always be employ'd in bearing down the Truth? that one of the Attributes of God should be in perpetual War with another? It is not so: There is a Ballance in the Hand of God, in which all Things in Heaven and Earth are weigh'd; out of which are dealt the several Shares, as of all other Things, so of Power too in the wisest Proportions. Power, upon the whole, is employ'd to protect Truth; it defends Virtue, Justice, Religion, Government, Order, and all the Reason that is comprehended in them. Sometimes indeed it is overstrain'd, sometimes it is wrong applied, and then so far it discourages Truth; but this is an accidental Abuse of a good Thing, and contrary to the general Course.

But

But it is said our Reason ought not to be influenced; there is no Merit in receiving Truth any other Way than by the Force of Reason: But suppose that Truth, at the same time that it is very reasonable, is very useful too; suppose that God is not only the most demonstrable, but the most important Truth to our own Happiness; suppose that Jesus Christ is not only a Truth, but a Truth necessary to our Perfection and Salvation, what shall we do in this Case? Must Truth lay aside all its Good, and become an insignificant Thing, that we may be able to reason upon it coolly, and with Indifference? and, for fear the Reason should be bribed, must we leave nothing in it worth our Acceptance.

Now, upon the Supposition above made, there is no Harm in all this; on the contrary, it is the utmost Goodness in God, since they all tend to the same Point, to make use of every Advantage of Interest, as well as Reason, to draw us to our Happiness, for that is the Issue of all; but we insist upon the Point of Honour, will receive it in a way of Reason only, and make our Salvation

SERM. tion our own Work : On the contrary, God
 XI. appears in the whole Course of his Dealings
 with us, not so much to have consulted the
 Honour of our Reason, as the Honour of his
 own Administration ; not so much our Me-
 rit, as the Glory of his own Grace ; not our
 Pride but our Happiness ; to which it is in-
 dispensably necessary that we be humble and
 thankful.

But where Power is abused, (for I have
 acknowledged that sometimes it is so) has
 Truth no Way to raise its Head ? Yes, when
 the Fulness of Times is come which the Fa-
 ther hath reserv'd in his own Hand, when
 Power is come to a certain Pitch of univer-
 sal Degeneracy, and God hath his strange
 Work to do upon the Earth, then the Spirit
 of the Lord descends upon some chosen In-
 struments of his Providence ; inspires them
 with a Force superior to all the Strength of
 the World, which enables them to declare
 the Truth boldly, and to do and suffer for it
 gloriously. And this is the Way by which,
 if any great Revolution is to be effected, God
 has chosen to effect it. It is not by sitting
 at Home, and reasoning at our Ease, and
 expecting

expecting to be secured, before we dare de- SERM. -
clare ourselves: It is an evident Proof of the XI.
little Value we put upon a Truth, when it
does not in our own Judgment countervail a
few Conveniences of Life, especially when
we are so nobly rewarded both in the present
Sense and the future Expectations of Glory.
If it be not worth a little Suffering of our
own, can we think it worth the Introducti-
on into the World, with all the Evils that
of course attend a Revolution?

To complain therefore of a few Hardships
which now and then attend Truth, is to
complain of the only Method by which Pro-
vidence has chosen to make it prevail. Had
the Apostles, before they enter'd into any
Kingdom, insisted upon a safe Conduct,
before they ventur'd to preach Jesus Christ,
desired the Laws to be suspended, what
would become of Christianity? These are
the Principles upon which a necessary Refor-
mation is to be justified; these the Methods
by which it is to be effected.

And as to our Brethren the Protestant Dis-
senters, those who cannot be perswaded to
sacrifice gloriously a few small Scruples (for
such themselves seem generally now to think
them)

SERM. them) to the great Truth of publick Order,

XI. where the Differences are small, they are intitled to the Toleration they enjoy; so much Indulgence as is consistent with the necessary Encouragement of the Establish'd Religion, which can never be given up, but with the most fatal Consequences; they need not seek Shelter under Principles which bring them upon a level with the most abandon'd of Men, for such is the Right of judging for ourselves, which either justifies nothing, or justifies every thing alike; the wildest Excesses of Thought, or Action, except it be supposed that there is a Right of Thinking, and not of Acting according to our Thoughts.

But it seems it is in Religion only that we have this Right, for in Points of Morality we ought to think truly; we can claim no Privilege of thinking Murder, Adultery, or Perjury, innocent Things: Any one that should advance those Doctrines would justly fall under the Publick Censure. But why this Difference? The Reason is plain, because Murder, or Perjury, are things that concern our civil Interests: but God and his Worship may either be or not be, without
any

any Consequence to the World. This is the plain Tendency of the Distinction. SERM.
XI.

And in truth, if Religion be a Thing so wholly of another World, that it has no Influence upon this, the Magistrate has no Concern in it at all. But if it be still, what it ever has been, the first Bond and Tie of all Duty, the strongest Cement of all Order and Government; if it be still a Truth, as it was three thousand Years ago here as well as in *Judæa*, that the Practice of Religion draws after it all Civil Prosperity, and the Neglect of it the utmost Curse of God upon a Nation; if Jesus Christ, when he fulfill'd and perfected Religion by adding to it the Sanctions of Eternity, destroy'd no Truth, no Consequence of it upon Temporal Affairs, but let it remain still as useful to the World as it was before; if this be true, I say, then the Magistrate is still deeply concern'd in protecting Religion, and discountenancing and punishing whatever would destroy it.

The contrary Scheme goes upon the Supposition of Religion being a Thing indifferent, and tends to beget a fatal Indifferency towards it. Hence it becomes a genteel thing
to

SERM. to fit loose in this Point, for fear of a Mistake to be ever open to Reason or Drollery against it, to feel no kindly Warmth of Affection in its Favour: And because sometimes People have been ridiculously or extravagantly zealous, and some have carried their Passions too high for it, there must be a mortal Stagnation of all Affection. As if, because we have sometimes Storms, we ought to have no Winds; because the Love of our Country, its Laws and Liberties, betrays us frequently into Wars and Mischiefs of every kind, therefore our Country deserves no Love at all. The Mischiefs that Religion has done, are a Demonstration of its Importance; for nothing else has Interest enough with Mankind to engage them to it; and accordingly it is universally true, that every thing that is most valuable, has accidentally created the greatest Evils.

Hence it is, that the Duties of Religion are only a Matter of Decency; its most solemn Institutions bare Convenience, and that Convenience so small, that it ought to submit not only to every Degree of worldly Interest, but to our Frolick and Wantonness, the better deciding of a Wager, or any Thing
still

still more insignificant. O God! that *fas* & *nefas*, Words that heretofore imported the strictest Obligation upon the Soul, the last Right and bounden Duty of Man, should now under Christianity mean no more than Convenient and Not Convenient. SERM. XL

And what has been the Consequence of all this Coldness? Why that, which must necessarily be, when once the great Bond of Duty that holds all together is burst, every smaller one cracks one after the other. It is not Duty, not that natural Veneration and Affection, which should pass between a People, and the Father of it, that binds our civil Obedience; no kindly Prepossessions in Favour of Government, but on the contrary a Thirst and Greediness after every little Novelty that makes against it: We obey, because we find something convenient in it; and from the same Convenience it is that we pay any Respect to our Parents; and in some polite Company it would be treated as an old-fashion'd Thing to mention Duty, or Honour, or Gratitude, to those that gave us Being. Every Man's own private Gains, his
private

SERM. private Pleasures, his Vanities, his Humours,
 XI. his Trifles, are now the only essential Things.

But, in the mean time, what can assure us in the Possession of any Thing at all? Will every Man's private Reason fill the Place of that Eternal Wisdom which upholds the Whole? When publick Justice, when everlasting Righteousness have no Force, will Honour, that thin Web of Man's Contexture, hold us? If we have thrown off the Authority of God, shall we long preserve a Respect to that little Idol, which we set up every Man in his own Heart? It cannot be.

God Almighty grant, that we may seriously reflect upon these Things in Season. To Him Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, be given all Honour, and Glory, now and ever.

5 JY61

F I N I S.